

AUTUMN COLOUR

- JAPAN BY RAIL -

- experience the beauty of Japanese nature, culture, art and regional food -
- enjoy walking in nature across Hokkaido, Honshu and Shikoku -

Tuesday 18 October – Friday 11 November 2022



Join us for a twenty-four day tour of Japan to experience **autumn colours on the Japanese islands** of Hokkaido, Honshu and Shikoku. As well as showcasing autumnal foliage in nature - the tour has a **special focus on the culture, art and regional foods of Japan**. Enjoy four nights in **lovely hot spring resorts**; **travel first class on the high speed 'Shinkansen' trains** – making your journey relaxed, exhilarating and very comfortable. Enjoy special scenic rail journeys through the colourful forest on little known private railways, and **options for walking in nature, cycling and canoeing**.

A range of accommodations from modern city hotels, convenient simpler business hotels and **stylish resort hotel with hot baths**. We've included meals when it is prudent, and for special locations, but also provided freedom to dine when, with whom and where you wish. **Enjoy local cuisine at 'izakaya' restaurants and great meals featuring local produce**.

Even if you've been to Japan before, you'll visit different locations and have a **deeper cultural experience**. The tour is led by Japanese speaking expert Takako Ishige, who along with Owen Johnstone-Donnet, have designed and organised the tour. The tour is limited to 15 guests.

Tuesday 18 October 2022 (MR/L) – Australia to Japan

Begin your experience of Japanese culture aboard a Japan Airlines daylight flight from Sydney to Tokyo, then transfer to the short flight to Sapporo's Chitose Airport. We stay at our hotel near the airport and have a good night's rest. (You can also depart Australia the prior evening, connecting through to Sapporo in the morning, and have a restful afternoon in Chitose to prepare for our exploration of Japan the following day.) Overnight near Sapporo Airport.

Wednesday 19 October 2022 (B/L/D) – to Jozankei Gorge, autumn colours and onsen

Japan's autumn leaves begin in Hokkaido and sweep south in a wave to Kyushu. We start our journey in Hokkaido to view the autumn colour in **Jozankei Gorge** – an onsen (hot spring) resort with a more than 150 year history. After breakfast we join our coach and head for Jozankei via a scenic drive, stopping where the autumn colours are best. We break our journey at Shikotsuko National Park and enjoy lunch in the beautiful nature. Our accommodation in Jozankei is Japanese style - a ryokan with lovely onsen and local Japanese produce in their restaurant. Hot springs were discovered in Jozankei by an ascetic monk, Mizumi Jozank in 1866, and the location has been loved by the Japanese people ever since. We enjoy the experiences offered by our accommodation and tonight **enjoy a quality Japanese 'Kaiseki' meal in 'Yukata'**. Overnight Jozankei. (Western style beds are available in the ryokan if preferred.)



Thursday 20 October 2022 (B/LL/D) – the autumn colours of Jozankei, with cycling option

After an authentic Japanese breakfast at our ryokan, choose to join either a bike group (with electric bicycles) or local bus, to visit **Hoheikyo Dam and surrounds** – considered the best location for viewing autumn leaves in Jozankei. We visit the Futami Tsuribashi Bridge - the most scenic point in the gorge, for a pleasant walk to view more autumnal colour. Walk through the village, **enjoy a light lunch from local suppliers**, and then explore the village at leisure. Try the foot bath in the village as visiting Japanese do, then enjoy a full body soak at the onsen in our hotel, experience a Japanese massage (O) or just relax before we enjoy our second Japanese 'Kaiseki' meal in our ryokan. Overnight Jozankei.

Friday 21 October 2022 (B/D) – to Hakodate, autumn colours and Hakodate's famous night view

After another lovely breakfast at our ryokan we head to **Sapporo**, Hokkaido's vibrant capital. Enroute we visit an Ainu Museum and learn of the history, culture and present day life of the indigenous peoples of Northern Japan. In Sapporo there is free time for luncheon before we join a JR Hakodate limited express train for Hakodate – with wonderful coastal and mountain views en route. **Hakodate** – as one of the first Japanese harbour cities to be opened to international trade after the country's era of isolation, has experienced notable influence from overseas, and the foreign population's former residential district and its Western style fort are among its attractions. Either today or tomorrow we will ascend **Mt Hakodate to enjoy one of Japan's great night views**. We enjoy a meal together and overnight Hakodate.



Saturday 22 October 2022 (B/L) – autumn colours of Hakodate, Kosetsuen Garden, Onuma Koen

Hakodate developed as a port town for trading with foreign countries at the end of the 19th century – at the bay area near the railway station and our hotel, a **Morning Market** is held where more than 360 stalls packed tightly together attract shoppers with freshly caught squid, scallops, salmon eggs, Atka mackerel, crabs, sea urchin, and many other fishes and shellfishes, as well as fresh produce such as melons. Depending upon the best autumn colour locations, we will select some of the possible options. Not far from Hakodate, Miharashi Park features a Japanese-style garden, "**Kosetsu-en**". With about 150 varieties of trees, the flowers and the quaint buildings provide the perfect foil for each other – the autumnal foliage is often too beautiful for words. Ginkgo, palmate maple, red maple, oliver maple and baby's breath, lend red and yellow to Kosetsu-en. Red Foliage Garden is elaborately adorned and the garden is simply a riot of colours and full of poetic charm. **O-numa National Park**, with nearby Ko-numa Marsh and Junsai-numa Marsh, is 24 kms in circumference, formed by the eruption of Mt. Koma-ga-take. With 126 islands, large and small, it is famous for the spectacular views of small islands connected by 18 bridges. We explore this beautiful location, crossing small bridges between islands dotted in the lake, at the base of Mt Koma-ga-take, and enjoy luncheon. In the afternoon perhaps catch the **Hakodate City Tram** to explore the **Motomachi area**. The harbour of Hakodate was one of the first to be opened to foreign trade in 1854 after Japan's era of isolation had come to an end.

As a result, many traders from Russia, China and Western countries moved to Hakodate. Motomachi, at the foot of Mount Hakodate, became a district favoured among the new foreign residents. Many foreign buildings remain in the area today. Among the most famous are the **Russian Orthodox Church**, the Old British Consulate, the Chinese Memorial Hall, the prefectural government's former branch office building and the old Hakodate Public Hall. Return to Hakodate and dinner at leisure. Overnight Hakodate.

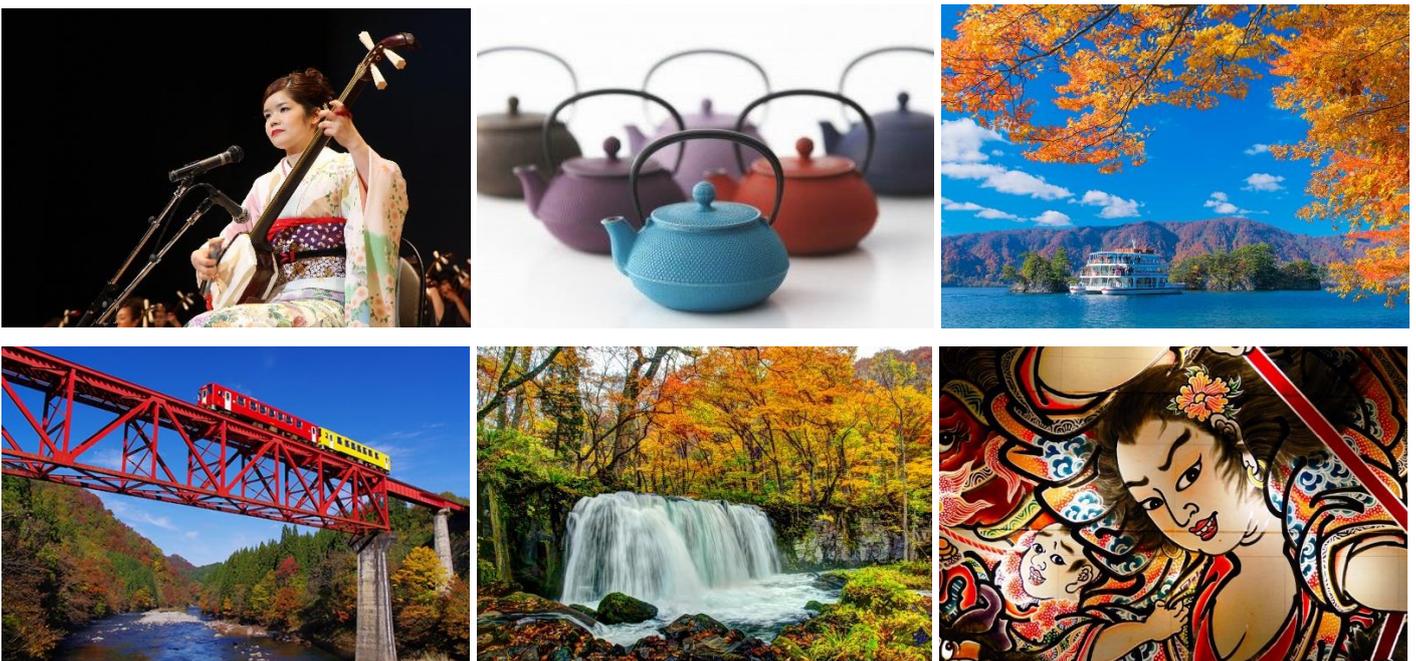


Sunday 23 October 2022 (B/D) – to Hirosaki, Neputa Village, local crafts and Hirosaki Castle Park

After breakfast, we transfer to Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto to join the JR Hokkaido / East Japan shinkansen for the undersea crossing to Honshu - through the 53.85km Seikan Tunnel – one of the world's longest undersea tunnels. Then to Hirosaki, the political and cultural capital of the Tsugaru Region. An important city during the Edo period, it remains one of the culturally richest cities in the northern Tohoku Region. After checking in to our hotel, we visit two of the key sights of Hirosaki - the "**Neputa Village**" - a museum about Hirosaki's famous festival that also introduces the city's other cultural specialties, and the **Hirosaki Castle Park**. The Neputa Matsuri takes place annually and features floats with large painted screens that depict beautiful women, mythological warriors and other themes, which are illuminated from within and paraded through the streets. Several floats and screens are on display in the Neputa Mura. Local stitching known as Kogan and lacquerware are also on display, and you can see them being made. You can also experience the drumming that accompanies the procession, and see traditional handicrafts being made. We walk through the impressive castle park and grounds, visit Hirosaki castle, then return to our hotel. We enjoy **dinner tonight in a local restaurant which features regional produce**. Overnight Hirosaki.

Monday 24 October 2022 (B) – Jogakura Ohashi Bridge, Oirase Stream Walk and cruise on Towada-ko

After breakfast, we explore Towada-Hachimantai National Park. We join our private coach and head to **Jogakura Ohashi bridge** – a deck arch bridge with a distance of 255 metres between each arch support - the longest of its type in Japan – we view the Hakkoda mountain range and Mt Iwaki. Then towards **Lake Towada** to enjoy **a lovely walk along Oirase stream**, which over 10 km drains Lake Towada – we walk a few kilometres along the stream - then enjoy **a boat cruise on Towada-ko Lake**, with stunning autumn colour around Mt Hakkoda. We return to Hirosaki, and enjoy a meal at one of the local restaurants. Overnight Hirosaki.



Tuesday 25 October 2022 (B) – Scenic rail journey, Kakunodate and to Morioka

Today we journey south to Morioka on a scenic private railway through Akita prefecture. **Enjoy the picturesque rural landscape on the rail journey** as we traverse farmlands and gorges with autumn colours – you'll gain an **insight into the local life of people in regional Japan**. On arrival at **Kakunodate, a former castle town and samurai stronghold**, enjoy an afternoon stroll through the atmospheric old town. You might like to try some of their local food for lunch, such as **Inaniwa Udon noodle (O)**, which uses their delicate chicken stock as a base – they have served the Japanese Royal Family for centuries. After a simple local rail experience, we board the Akita shinkansen and head for Morioka, the capital of Iwate prefecture, for our two nights' accommodation. For Japan, Morioka has an unusual and interesting food culture due to the historic influence of Korea – the Korean food culture is widely evident with restaurants that serve Korean barbecue and 'Morioka reimen' (cold noodle) cuisine. Tonight, you can join the group for a traditional Japanese 'Korean' meal (O.) Overnight Morioka.

Wednesday 26 October 2022 (B) – Geibikei Gorge and Nambu Tekki iron casting workshop

This morning we explore **Geibikei** - a spectacular gorge outside Hiraizumi in the interior of Iwate Prefecture. We experience a calm, 90 minute ride on a flat-bottomed boat navigated by a boatman with a pole. Pleasant natural scenery with impressive, tall cliffs and rock formations can be viewed along the way. About one kilometre into the gorge we leave the boat for a 15-20 minute walk a few hundred metres to view a large rock, shaped like a lion's nose, after which the gorge was named. You can try your luck in throwing lucky charms into the lion's nose, and the successful will have good fortune ahead. The scenery along the gorge is attractive at any time of the year, but particularly so during the autumn colour season. In the afternoon we return to Morioka and visit their **traditional iron casting workshop** - 'Nambu Tekki.' Using traditional techniques, their products require some three weeks to produce each item, and they are in great demand abroad, particularly in Europe. As well as their traditional base colour, they now produce myriad colours for the European market. Fortunately we can organise to send purchases to our last destination on our tour so you do not have to carry items of cast iron in your luggage for two weeks! Enjoy an evening meal at one of the many restaurants near our hotel, and overnight Morioka.

Thursday 27 October 2022 (B/D) – to Toyama on Japan's western coast

Today we head south aboard the Tohoku Shinkansen to Omiya, changing to the Hokuriku Shinkansen for our journey to the edge of the **Tateyama Kurobe Alpine mountain range**. Our destination is Toyama on the west coast of Honshu, and at the base of lovely mountain scenery. This afternoon we visit the **Toyama Glass Museum** which showcases a large collection of glass art from around the world. The beautifully modern Kirari building that houses the museum was designed by world-renowned architect Kuma Kengo and it also contains the city's public library. The permanent exhibition on the sixth floor hosts the "Glass Art Garden", which boasts a collection of five installations by famed glad artist **Dale Chihuly**. Dinner is included and overnight Toyama.

Friday 28 October 2022 (B) – Shirakawago historic village and Takayama

Today we visit the historic village of **Shirakawago**. The remote mountain villages of gassho-style houses in the Hida Highlands were registered as cultural heritage sites in 1995. In autumn, the colourful tinted leaves highlight the traditional houses standing side by side like a fairy tale. Enjoy famous Hida Beef in the simple village café's. We return via a different route, to give you a perspective of this beautiful mountainous region. We head to Takayama, which retains a traditional touch like few other Japanese cities, especially in its beautifully preserved old town. Our stay is brief, with time for a quick walk through the old town, and you can appreciate the traditional crafts such as **sashiko**. We then join the Wide View Hida Limited Express to Toyama, travelling along a scenic rail line that cuts through mountain gorges and along the side of rivers. We return to Toyama with dinner at leisure at one of the many local restaurants. Overnight Toyama.

Saturday 29 October 2022 (B/LR) – Unazuki-onsen and the Kurobe Kyokoku trolley train and Kurobe Gorge

This morning we head to **Unazuki Onsen**, the largest hot spring resort in Toyama Prefecture. Situated at the mouth of the Kurobe Valley in the north-eastern part of the prefecture, the Unazuki Onsen hot spring is fed by the Kuronagi-onsen hot spring, located seven kilometres upstream of the Kurobe-gawa River, and producing 3,000 tonnes of water per day. We explore one of the gorges of the **Tateyama Mountain Range** - the deepest V-shaped valley in the entire country, and on our **train ride along the Kurobe Kyokoku Line**, we view the beauty of the valley between Unazuki Onsen Station and Keyakidaira Station. The trolley train takes 1 hour and 20 minutes to cover 20.1 kilometres, and includes 41 tunnels and 22 bridges. One of the bridges, called Atobiki-bashi, lies over the deepest part of the gorge, and is 64 metres long and 60 metres high. There are many hot springs along the trolley route, and you can walk one kilometre from Keyakidaira Station, the last stop of the trolley route, and you will see the Kurobegawa River from the precipitous cliff called the Sarutobi Valley. We enjoy a simple lunch at the top of the gorge, and there is the opportunity for those who wish to experience an outdoor foot hot spring experience. Return to Toyama with light refreshments and overnight.



Sunday 30 October 2022 (B) – to Kanazawa, Kenrokuen garden and Kanazawa culture

After breakfast we travel the short distance from Toyama to Kanazawa on the Hokuriku Shinkansen. We visit **Kenrokuen Garden, considered one of Japan's three most beautiful gardens**, and then visit the **21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art**. Opened in 2004 it exhibits works of acclaimed contemporary artists from Japan and all over the world, and is one of Japan's most popular art museums. We visit the preserved **Chaya-machi district**, reminiscent of ancient Kanazawa. In the afternoon we return to Kanazawa Station and return aboard the shinkansen to Toyama and our hotel. Dinner is at leisure in one of the many local restaurants. Overnight Toyama.

Monday 31 October 2022 (B/D) – to Okayama, Korakuen Garden and Okayama Castle

This morning we head south west along the West Japan Railway to Kyoto, where we change for the Tokaido – Sanyo Shinkansen for our journey west to Okayama. We arrive at Okayama early afternoon, and we visit the beautiful **Korakuen Garden – considered one of the 'three best gardens in Japan.'** Located just beside Okayama Castle which can be seen from the garden as "borrowed scenery," there is also the option to visit **Okayama Castle**, also known as "crow castle," due to its black exterior. Overnight Okayama.

Tuesday 1 November 2022 (B) – Shikoku, Tokushima, Awa Odori dancing or Oboke / Koboake Gorge

After breakfast we board a JR Shikoku Limited Express train for the island of Shikoku. **Cross the Japan Inland Sea** on one of the engineering wonders of the modern world, **the Grand Seto-ohashi bridge**. A collective term for six bridges that connect Kojima in Okayama Prefecture on Honshu and Sakaide of Kagawa Prefecture on Shikoku, spanning five islands, the bridges took 40 years and a tremendous amount of money to build. **The structure is more than 13 kilometres long, and consists of three suspension bridges, two oblique suspension bridges and one truss bridge.** Depending upon the progress south of the autumnal colours, we will explore nature with autumn colours in the Oboke and Koboake Gorges, or visit **Tokushima**, the capital of the prefecture of the same name. **Famed for its Awa Odori festival**, thousands flock to the city in August to experience the "Fool's Dance" whose origins date back 400 years. This nickname comes from the lyrics to the common dance song, which translates as follows: **"Fools dance and fools watch, if both are fools, you might as well dance"**. Though not August, we will experience the spectacle at the **Awa Odori Kaikan Museum** - there are explanations on the history and attractiveness of Awa Odori, exhibitions of costumes and musical instruments used, a 3D theatre where you can enjoy the dance, and the main attraction - an actual Awa Odori performance. We will then ascend by **Bizan Ropeway to the top of Mount Bizan** – you'll have a full view of the Tokushima Plains from the mountain top, and views over the inland sea. Dinner is at leisure and overnight Okayama.

Wednesday 2 November 2022 (B/L) – Naoshima

After breakfast, we head to the port of Uno to enjoy the short **scenic ferry crossing on the Inland Sea**, to explore **Naoshima** – famed for its **outdoor art and Benesse House**. Benesse House Museum opened in 1992 as a facility integrating a museum with a hotel, based on the concept of "coexistence of nature, art and architecture." Designed by famed **Tadao Ando**, the facility is built on high ground overlooking the Seto Inland Sea and features large apertures that serve to open the interior to the splendid natural surroundings. In addition to exhibiting painting, sculpture, photography and installations in its collection.



The Museum also contains permanent site-specific installations that artists have created especially for the building, selecting locations on their own and designing the works for those spaces. The Museum's artworks are found not just within its galleries, but in all parts of the building, as well as in scattered locations along the seashore that borders the complex and in the nearby forest. Enjoy a day of art and scenery, and a lovely ferry crossing on the inland sea - we return to Okayama for dinner at leisure and overnight.

Thursday 3 November 2022 (B/D) – to Kyoto

After breakfast join the shinkansen to Kyoto. We leave luggage at the hotel, then enjoy **sightseeing** where autumn colours are best – possibly **Fushimi Inari** with its famed sequence of red torii gates, or Tofukuji Temple, or **Kiyomizudera**, one of the most famous temples in Kyoto. Built at the end of the 8th century, the main hall was constructed in the 17th century, and is famous for its location overhanging a cliff. The platform of the main hall, which is supported by 139 giant pillars, affords a spectacular view of the town. There is also the opportunity to walk through the picturesque lanes of Ninenzaka to the colourful Gion. We return to the hotel and enjoy a simple meal at one of the local excellent restaurants close to our hotel. Dinner together tonight at a live Teppanyaki restaurant. Overnight Kyoto.



Friday 4 November 2022 (B) – Mt Hieizan - Enryakuji, Nishijin Textiles, Kimono Show and Handicraft Centre

We head into the mountains this morning to visit the special site of **Enryakuji** - located in Kyoto's eastern mountain range on **Mount Hieizan, Enryakuji** is one of the most important monasteries in Japanese history and the headquarters of the Tendai sect of Japanese Buddhism. Enryakuji was founded in 788 by Saicho, the monk who introduced Tendai Buddhism from China into Japan. At its peak, Enryakuji had as many as 3000 subtemples and a powerful army of warrior monks who often engaged in power struggles with other monasteries and political leaders. On his way to remove all potential rivals and unite the country, Oda Nobunaga attacked and destroyed most of Enryakuji's buildings and killed most of its inhabitants in 1571. Therefore, most of today's temple buildings date back to the early Edo Period, when Enryakuji was rebuilt. Experience cablecars, mountains and views, as well as a lovely mountain walk in this sacred and beautiful location. We return to Kyoto via a different route, then visit the Nishijin Textile Centre, Kyoto Handicraft Centre, and then enjoy dinner at leisure and overnight Kyoto.

Saturday 5 November 2022 (B/D) – the Miho Museum and to Nagoya

This morning we head to what has been described as an Earthly Paradise among the Mountains. First-time visitors to the **Miho Museum** are amazed at how harmoniously it melts into the surroundings. Nestled among mountains, the path to the museum passes through a tunnel and over a hanging bridge before you arrive at the entrance. The buildings were **designed by I.M. Pei, the celebrated architect of the Glass Pyramid at the Louvre and the West Wing of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts**. Based on an image of Shangri-La, eighty percent of the building is buried underground to blend into the natural landscape. The collection contains antique and ancient pieces from a range of regions, including Japan, China, Greece, Rome and the Middle East. We return to Kyoto and board a shinkansen for the short journey to Nagoya. In the early evening we meet for dinner together in one of Nagoya's myriad restaurants. Overnight Nagoya.

Sunday 6 November 2022 (B) – the Nakasendo Walk - forest, waterfalls and traditional villages

The **Nakasendō** (Central Mountain Route), also called the Kisokaidō, was one of the five routes of the Edo period, and one of the two that connected Edo (modern-day Tokyo) to Kyoto. There were 69 stations (staging-posts) between Edo and Kyoto. Although there has been much modern development along the Nakasendō, a few stretches remain in their original form. The most well-known section lies in the Kiso Valley, between Tsumago-juku in Nagano Prefecture and Magome-juku in Gifu Prefecture. The area was first made famous by the early 20th-century writer Shimazaki Tōson, who chronicled the effects of the Meiji Restoration on the valley in his landmark novel *Before the Dawn*. We traverse this eight-kilometre section of the Nakasendō which can be walked comfortably, and both Tsumago-juku and Magome-juku have preserved and restored traditional architecture. The walk between these historical post towns requires around three hours, with forests, restored paving and fine views of waterfalls along the way. For those who prefer not to make the walk with us today, we will arrange an alternate activity. Dinner is at leisure, and overnight Nagoya.



Monday 7 November 2022 (B) – the Japanese art of Shibori, Central Japan Railway Maglev Museum

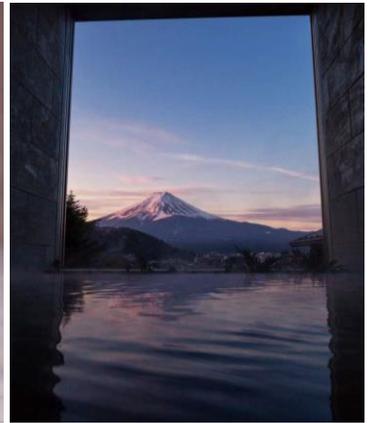
Learn of the Japanese art of **shibori** - a method of dyeing cloth by binding, stitching, folding, twisting, and compressing. In Japan, the earliest known example of cloth dyed with the shibori technique dates from the 8th century where indigo was the main dye used. Today in Arimatsu, shibori-tie-dyed silk fabric is still made. Arimatsu is one of the 53 stage towns of the Tokaido (one of the five major highways) which flourished during Edo period. It still retains the atmosphere with the traditional street lined with typical Japanese merchant houses. Many shops deal in the traditional specialty products of Arimatsu shibori. Alternatively, you can join a group for a visit to the **Central Japan Railway's Museum** - opened in 2011 the museum seeks to educate visitors on the advances in high speed rail in Japan and displays several trains including historic steam locomotives, world record setting experimental shinkansen (bullet train) and the latest magnetic levitating trains (maglev). A collection of 39 retired train cars are displayed in the museum. Many of these can be entered or viewed from underneath, and are accompanied by a host of exhibits explaining the different parts of the trains and all aspects of their operation and maintenance. Another section of the museum is dedicated to maglev trains and JR Central's plans to construct a maglev high speed link between Tokyo and Osaka. In the afternoon we visit the splendid Nagoya Castle Palace, restored to its former glory, it is a stunning architectural site and the impressive paintings and internal rooms are amazing. Dinner at leisure and overnight Nagoya.

Tuesday 8 November 2022 (B/D) – to Kawaguchiko - Fuji Five Lakes

After breakfast we head to towards Mt Fuji and our destination of Kawaguchiko. Rising 3776 metres above sea level, Mount Fuji is Japan's tallest mountain and most iconic landmark. Images of the nearly perfect, solitary volcano have appeared in paintings, wood block prints and other artworks for centuries. Some collections even attempt to capture the essence of seeing the mountain from various viewpoints, Hokusai's popular "36 Views of Mount Fuji" being a prime example. The Fuji Five Lakes (Fuji-goko) are a group of five small lakes in Yamanashi prefecture, on the north side of Mount Fuji. Kawaguchiko is our base for two nights to explore in the foothill of Mt Fuji. Kawaguchiko has some of the best views of Fuji possible — reflected across a lake or beyond carpets of moss phlox — and there's no shortage of things to do here either! Our accommodation is a lovely resort style hotel, at the base of Japan's iconic Mt Fuji. Enjoy a relaxing onsen before a fine dinner, and overnight Kawaguchiko.

Wednesday 9 November 2022 (B/D) – Itchiku Kubota Art Museum, Kawaguchiko Art Museum

This morning we explore around Kawaguchiko - the **Itchiku Kubota Art Museum** provides a unique opportunity to see the works of Itchiku Kubota—a world-renowned specialist in the ancient art of fabric dyeing. Having started at the age of 20, Kubota became interested in the art of **tsujigahana** after serving as a prisoner of war and soon developed his own style and techniques. Although he did not have his own exhibition until the age of 60, he is now well known as a saviour of an art once lost in the 17th century. The museum boasts numerous examples of his work including beautiful kimono, as well as a tearoom with stunning views across the lake of Mt. Fuji. There are beautiful gardens surrounding the museum with waterfalls and forests. The northern shore of Lake Kawaguchiko offer some of the most breathtaking views of the mountain that sometimes come with a reflection in the lake. Photographers will enjoy the "Momiji Tunnel" for autumn colours - a maple tree covered road section along the lake's northern shore. Depending on local advice and weather we will visit the locations to maximize viewing opportunities of Fuji-san. We return to our lovely resort hotel for an onsen, before an evening dinner and overnight Kawaguchiko.



Thursday 10 November 2022 (B) – Muse Museum to Tokyo, then Narita/Haneda Airport

Our final day in Japan sees a visit to the Kawaguchiko **Muse Museum** which holds regular exhibitions on the works of doll maker Atae Yuki. Yuki's works are highly-praised locally and abroad, being made of cotton cloth they are so well-crafted they are described as 'cloth sculptures'. We then head towards Tokyo for some last minute shopping, then changing for the train to Narita or Haneda Airport, and for overnight flights back to Australia.

Friday 11 November 2022 (B) – arrive Australia

A morning arrival back in Australia and the conclusion of our wonderful Autumn Colour tour of Japan by rail.

**SJR AUTUMN JAPAN
Travel map**



GENERAL COMMENTS AND BOOKING CONDITIONS

ACCOMMODATION, MEALS AND RAIL TRAVEL

Accommodation is generally in 4 star standard hotels. In some locations the best available may not be 4 star, and in some locations we have selected superior hotels or resort style hotels as part of the experience of the location. Some nights we have included traditional ryokan style accommodation with tatami mat floors and comfortable futon beds prepared on the tatami matting. Shoes need to be removed whilst in the ryokan, in rooms and at meals. Ryokan meals are generally included, and whilst we will aim to accommodate dietary requests, some meal experiences are a traditional Japanese set meal. Meals are included as shown - breakfast is included most mornings, however as a general rule we have not included lunch or dinner when there is a range of options, and you can choose the style and time of dining that you prefer. Meals included are indicated as (B) Breakfast, (MR) Morning Refreshments, (L) Luncheon, (LL) Light Luncheon, (AR) Afternoon Refreshments, (LR) Light Refreshments and (D) Dinner. Travel is generally in first class (Green Car) seats, though some services only offer standard accommodation and on some trains Green Car accommodation can be limited – we'll arrange the best seating possible. There is a wide range of options for eating in Japan - from very simple meals to elegant dining experiences, and from traditional Japanese food, through to the very best of international western cuisine. The choice is yours. For lunch we'll identify a number of eating options. Every town in which we stay where dinner is not included has a range of restaurants where it is relatively easy and inexpensive to eat well and enjoyably. Major department stores have food halls with freshly prepared food. Most shops and at all railway stations you can purchase a 'bento' - local take away meal boxes with a fresh range of meats, seafood, vegetables and rice. Bakeries offering tempting fresh items abound, especially at railway stations. Eating and enjoying the foods of Japan is part of the tour experience. You can eat as simply or as lavishly as you wish. Japan is exceptionally clean, fresh food a priority, and preparation and hygiene surpass Australia.

PERSONAL SERVICE AND MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

SJR prides itself on its personal service and attention to detail. The tour is escorted by the two organisers of the itinerary who have both travelled to Japan extensively, or lived in Japan for many years. You are assured of the utmost service and our commitment to your satisfaction. We recognise each guest has different interests, and we will provide the opportunity to allow you to rest from the group, explore by yourself, return to places, or visit friends or special sites you've read about – if you wish. If your interests are gardens or castles or scenery, you can tailor your activities to focus on these specific interests. Detailed advice and assistance will be given to help you, and most travel requirements can be made for you.

CAPACITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TOUR

Fitness and mobility are necessary for participation in the tour. Tour passengers must be able to manage their own luggage, and to carry/wheel it on and off trains, from stations to hotels, and if necessary, up or down a flight of stairs. Whilst most stations have escalators / elevators, some older and regional stations may not. Visiting temples and shrines involves walking up and down flights of steps, and in some cases removing shoes. The tour involves travel on the public transport networks of Japanese cities.

By payment of your deposit and tour fare you confirm you are of a suitable level of mobility and fitness to participate in the tour, and are aware of the nature of the tour. Whilst it is often possible to use taxis to reduce the distances walked, this option is at your own expense.

FARES AND BOOKING PROCEDURES

The tour is limited in size to 15 guests, and bookings will be confirmed in order of receipt of a deposit of \$2,000 per person. **The tour fare is \$14,480 per person (twin/double share) plus airfares from Australia, with a \$2,525 single supplement for hotels.** The tour fare includes first class rail travel in Japan (some rail services may not have first class accommodation available, or in some instances, not sufficient for the whole group, and in these cases, standard rail accommodation is provided); all bus, tram, metro and light rail transfers when part of the group; all accommodation on a twin/double share basis (single accommodation is available on payment of the single supplement); sightseeing and entrance fees as indicated, and meals as shown in the itinerary for each day. The fare does not include meals not identified, drinks, excess baggage charges, gratuities, telephone calls, laundry, any items of a personal nature, travel outside the organised group, or taxi usage when not part of the planned transport means. Due to the variety of interests of individuals, and the large range of temples, gardens, shrines, museums etc. available for inspection on some days, we have included key features in the tour cost. Inspection and entry fees when not part of the planned group activity are not included in the tour cost. Additional or optional activities such as some cable car journeys, boat cruises or entrance fees are not included in the cost. Bookings should be made on the attached form.

The deposit of \$2,000 per person should be forwarded by cheque, payable to St James Rail, along with the booking form, to: SJR, PO Box N400, GROSVENOR PLACE, 1220. You can also pay by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):

Bank: Westpac
Account Name: Scenic Journeys by Rail
BSB: 033 364
Account Number: 612826
Reference: Your name and 'Japan'

If paying by EFT, please include the Reference above, and email to sjr@digitor.com.au to advise you have done so – or if you have used a different reference. Please forward the booking form to the address above, or scan and email it. You can also pay by credit card – please call to provide details.

AIR TRAVEL TO/FROM JAPAN

Recommended flights for this tour are either with Japan Airlines on Tuesday 18 October 2022 – a daylight flight from Sydney to Tokyo, and a return overnight from Tokyo at the conclusion of the tour; or an overnight flight from Australia on Monday 17 October 2022, connecting on the morning of Tuesday 18 October with a flight through to Sapporo's Chitose Airport. A range of other flight options exist from other Australian capitals, including overnight services in both directions with Qantas or All Nippon Airlines (ANA), flights via the Gold Coast or Cairns with Jetstar, or travel via Singapore or Hong Kong with Singapore Airlines or Cathay Pacific respectively. On receipt of booking we'll contact you to discuss your flight preferences and with our travel agent Jones and Turner, Travel Associates, Paddington, we will identify the best airfare to meet your travel needs. Business Class seating is also available.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Call us on (02) 9326 9660, 0418 585 838 or email at sjr@digitor.com.au for further details or information.

COVID VACCINATION STATUS AND COVID TESTING

It is highly likely that some airlines, and entry to the United Kingdom itself, may require proof of full vaccination. Undertaking COVID testing prior to flights and on arrival in Great Britain, may also be required. As the specific requirements applicable in October 2022 are currently not defined, it is your responsibility to meet these requirements.

BOOKING, CANCELLATION AND TRAVEL CONDITIONS

Bookings will be accepted on the attached form. **Changes to the itinerary** - as the tour operates to some remote parts of Japan, where accommodation and travel options are limited, the tour organiser reserves the right to change and amend the itinerary at his sole discretion based on necessary changes to travel plans due to air, sea and land schedule changes and hotel availability. **Currency fluctuations** – the tour organiser reserves the right to adjust the tour price based on significant foreign exchange movement between the Australian Dollar and the Japanese Yen. **Cancellation** fees apply as follows: the initial deposit is non-refundable. After payment of further deposits towards the final tour cost, costs for tickets, accommodation, sightseeing etc made on your behalf will incur cancellation charges equal to the cancellation charges incurred to us, imposed by suppliers/operators, plus a fee to cover administrative costs – more than three months prior to departure, \$1000 per person; within three months, \$2000 per person. No refund will be made for cancellations after 1 June 2022. All cancellation or administration charges imposed by the suppliers/operators of components of this tour must be borne by you, the passenger. **Responsibility** - St James' Rail acts only as the organiser of the tour. On acceptance of tickets and travel documents for this tour, which may be evidenced in writing by a ticket, voucher, letter, or other document, you accept that neither St James' Rail nor representatives from any other firm supplying services in conjunction with this tour programme, shall be liable in contract or in tort (actionable wrong) for any injury, loss, damage, accident, sickness, delay or additional expense to you or your possessions arising directly or indirectly by force majeure or other events which are beyond our control, or which are not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part, including, but not limited to, civil disturbance, fire, floods, acts of God, acts of Governments or other authorities, changes in itinerary, weather, strikes, war, transportation disruption, failure of machinery or equipment, industrial action, pandemic, quarantine or any other cause. Where travel is by scheduled carrier, or charter service, that carrier's responsibility is limited in accordance with their conditions of carriage. Similarly all luggage is your responsibility, and we cannot be held liable for any loss or delay however caused. The care of your travel documents are your own responsibility. All expenses incurred by loss must be borne by you. Airline regulations and conditions are written on the airline tickets and are issued to passengers subject to their acceptance of these conditions. Changes in exchange rates, taxes and any land arrangements costs may alter the price of the tour, and St James' Rail reserves the right to change, amend or cancel this tour and/or itinerary if necessary. We reserve the right to amend the itinerary en route to account for unforeseen changes or conditions, or to improve the tour experience for the majority, as determined by the tour leader. **Passports, visas, vaccinations, health requirements** – a valid passport with six months validity from the end of the tour is required.

Obtaining all visas, vaccinations or other health requirements to meet the expectation of airlines or foreign governments is your responsibility. St James' Rail cannot accept responsibility for any losses or expenses incurred as a result of a passenger not holding valid and necessary passport, visa, vaccination or health documents. **Special conditions relating to COVID-19** – if the tour is unable to proceed due to Government restrictions, SJR may at our election: postpone your travel arrangements to a future date, in which case we will issue you with a credit note equal to amounts paid at the time of postponement; or cancel your travel arrangements, in which case our contract with you will terminate. If we cancel your travel arrangements and our contract terminates, neither of us will have any claim for damages against the other. However, we will refund payments made by you less unrecoverable third-party costs and less fair compensation for work undertaken by us up until the time of termination and in connection with the processing of any refund. SJR will refund payments it is able to recover or not incur from the various suppliers of services to this tour. Refunds will be made when the funds have been received by SJR from third party suppliers. **Full details of terms and conditions:** if you would like a copy of the full terms and conditions applicable to all SJR tours please contact us and we will forward a copy to you.

INSURANCE

A condition of travel on this tour is that you have a comprehensive travel insurance policy to protect yourself against cancellation fees, health and other travel risks. An insurance policy can be sent to you from our travel agent, Jones and Turner Travel Associates, Paddington, for your consideration. Obtaining insurance cover for the tour is your responsibility. It is highly recommended that insurance is secured at the same time or shortly after deposit payments are made.

AUTUMN COLOUR - JAPAN BY RAIL -

Tuesday 18 October – Friday 11 November 2022

Booking Form

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Name:

Address: Suburb: Postcode:

Home tel: Work tel: Mobile:

BOOKING DETAILS (Full passenger names EXACTLY as shown in your passport:)

Passenger 1 Name:

Date of Birth: Passport No: Expiry Date:

One World Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

Passenger 2 Name:

Date of Birth: Passport No: Expiry Date:

One World Frequent Flyer No: Airline No:

FOR ADDITIONAL PASSENGERS PLEASE PROVIDE THE ABOVE DETAILS ON A SEPARATE SHEET

PAYMENT

..... I have enclosed \$ as deposit (\$2,000 per person.) Please make cheques payable to St James Rail.

..... I have paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) as described previously. Please email SJR to advise and send this form.

Bank: Westpac
Account Name: Scenic Journeys by Rail
BSB: 033 364
Account Number: 612826
Reference: Your name and 'Japan'

A letter will be sent acknowledging receipt of your deposit and providing further details.

Debit/credit card payment is available, with merchant fees of 0.6% for debit cards, 1.00% for Visa/MasterCard and American Express. Please call us to make payment by debit/credit card.

AIR TRAVEL TO/FROM JAPAN

..... Please book me/us to travel from Sydney to and from Japan on the recommended flights:

..... Tue 18 October daylight with JAL Thu 10 November overnight with Japan Airlines

..... Mon 17 October overnight with Qantas Thu 10 November overnight with Qantas

..... Mon 17 October overnight with ANA Thu 10 November overnight with ANA

..... Economy class air travel Premium Economy class air travel

..... Business class air travel

..... Please call me to discuss air travel options from other Australian cities or with other carriers.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

Single rooms: Double rooms: Twin (two bedded) rooms:

A single supplement is payable for sole use of rooms in hotels/ryokans.

RYOKAN – TRADITIONAL JAPANESE ACCOMMODATION

The tour includes accommodation in a quality Japanese ryokan style hotel. This can involve sleeping on tatami mat floors, with futons (thin mattresses) and require you to remove shoes in the ryokan, the rooms, and at dinner and breakfast.

Please advise below if you are not able (or do not wish) to sleep on tatami mats with futons in Japanese ryokan hotels, or do not wish to remove your shoes. We will then book you a western style hotel room or nearby Western style hotel.

..... I prefer western style beds, but am happy to remove shoes in the ryokan

..... I prefer western style beds, and do not wish to remove shoes for meals (we will accommodate you in a nearby hotel.)

DIETARY REQUESTS (we will do our best to accommodate and advise accordingly)

Please indicate any dietary request :
.....
.....

INSURANCE

..... Please send an insurance policy from Jones and Turner, Travel Associates, Paddington, 2011

YOUR SIGNATURE

I have read the reservation conditions outlined above and accept them on behalf of myself and my party by whom I am authorised to make this agreement.

Signature of person making reservation: Date:

Cancellation charges will apply as advised in this itinerary. An insurance policy can be forwarded from our travel agent at Jones and Turner, Travel Associates, Paddington.

Telephone 02 9326 9660
Email sjr@digitor.com.au

Mobile 0418 585 838
Web www.stjamesrail.org

September 2021