

SIGNATURE TOUR

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2024 FOOD TOUR OF KYUSHU, JAPAN IN AUTUMN

A gastronomic adventure through the island of Kyushu, fast-becoming Japan's foodie destination for its fresh produce and culinary tradition and innovation.

"We found this a great tour for foodies, as well as a great all round introduction to southern Japan for anyone."
 — Maureen & Tony Wallace



DURATION
 13 days



THEME
 Autumn Tours, Food Tours



GROUP SIZE
 Min 4 - Max 8



TOP TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



Michelin star restaurant in Fukuoka

Enjoy the gorgeous setting, beautiful presentation, fresh ingredients and magnificent skills of chefs at top restaurants.



High quality ceramics in Karatsu, Arita and Imari

You have the chance to visit production sites of Japanese premier ceramics which are admired worldwide.



Fresh seafood in Nagasaki

In Nagasaki, you visit a local fish monger who prepares seafood for their local restaurants.



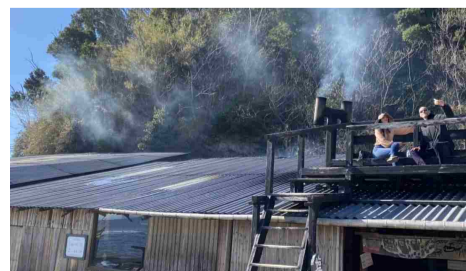
Exclusive cooking class

You will learn directly from a top creative food expert at her home studio.



Casual food experiences

You won't be eating only at high-end restaurants on this tour. Casual food such as ramen and yatai (street cart diners) are also part of the tour.



Visit to traditional food production sites

Visiting generations-old soy sauce maker and green tea merchant, salt farm using ancient method and award winning boutique sake brewery. Only possible



by small groups.

SEE FULL TOUR ITINERARY

TOUR OVERVIEW

2024 Food Tour of Japan in Autumn is one of our most popular tours. This Kyushu tour takes you away from Japan's main island and its busy cities to explore the island of Kyushu – Japan's friendly western island famous for its temperate climate, laid-back rhythm, multicultural heritage and fantastic Kyushu food. Fukuoka is listed in the Eat category of Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2023.

The autumn colours in Kyushu are stunning and this tour has been purpose-built to have you surrounded by the reds, browns and golden leaves that distinguish Kyushu tours autumn.

The tour starts and ends in Kyushu Island. We highly recommend you spend a few more days of your own before or after the group tour to discover endless attractions of Japan in other areas especially if you are the first-time visitors to this country. Journey to the East will be delighted to plan your private itinerary and provide information to suit your interests.

ITINERARY

DOWNLOAD FULL ITINERARY

▼ Day 1: Arrival in Fukuoka

Fukuoka, known as the 'River City'. It is **the fifth largest city of Japan** and very vibrant and cosmopolitan. It has good access with **an international airport** and **JR Hakata Station** where shinkansen (bullet train) stops. Journey to the East can offer advice its guests on **the best way to get to Fukuoka** from where you are.

On your arrival in Fukuoka (whether that's by rail or air), you will be met by a Journey to the East guide and **escorted to your hotel**.

After a good night's sleep, you will be ready to start the first full day of your **2024 Food Tour of Kyushu, Japan in Autumn**.

*Many of our guests arrive a day or so early to settle in before the tour starts. We can arrange your additional nights accommodation in the same room as the tour.

 Fukuoka (The Blossom Hakata Premier)

 No meals

▼ Day 2: Fukuoka

Your Japanese food tour begins by exploration of Fukuoka. With a **history going back some 2,000+ years**, there is plenty to enjoy. Kyushu's largest city has historically been the centre of western Japan's trading contact with its Asian neighbors and you will feel the influence.

Walking through Fukuoka, your guide will take you to;

- **Kushida Shrine**, built around 757, a host of **one of the biggest festivals in Kyushu**, the vibrant **Yamakasa Festival**.
- See some **traditional industries and age-old crafts** at Hakata Folk Museum,
- Experience **an old-style shopping arcade** selling local food products and **timeless cultural items such as Buddhist alters and knives** at the Kawabata Shopping Arcade.

For lunch, "**Hakata ramen**" noodles are on the menu, arguably the most famous dish of Fukuoka, and we **find out how serious the locals are about their ramen!**

Tonight, you enjoy a welcome dinner at a **Michelin-starred Japanese restaurant** – an exquisite multi-course banquet of seasonally sensitive local foods served in a beautiful setting. A very fitting introduction to this **2024 Food Tour of Kyushu, Japan in Autumn!**

 Fukuoka (The Blossom Hakata Premier)

 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 3: Dazaifu & Cooking Class



JttE Special Experience #1!

This morning you will have a chance to **learn how to cook Japanese food yourself**. You will visit a cooking studio housed in a renovated traditional house in a suburb of Fukuoka. Here a creative **food expert will passionately pass on recipes of Japanese dishes**, which you can recreate back at home.

Heading for the town of Dazaifu in the afternoon, you will see the **magnificent Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine, which dates back to the 10th century**. The shrine commemorates the life of a famous Kyoto poet-scholar who was exiled to Dazaifu but later deified as the god of literature and scholarship.

A great way to **get an informative overview of Japanese history** within the context of the broader Asian region is the **visit the Kyushu National Museum** with your guide.

JttE Special Experience #2!

Dinner tonight is another **iconic slice of Hakata food culture** – the yatai food cart. These mobile carts roll into the city in the evening and serve up delicious food cooked right in front of you. Seating only 10 people, the relaxed atmosphere, shared conversation, and delicious food make it **an unmissable Hakata food experience**.



Fukuoka (The Blossom Hakata Premier)



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 4: Itoshima



Set off to **Itoshima** by the picturesque Futamigaura Bay, which is fast becoming a **foodie haven**.

JttE Special Experience #3!

Here you will visit a fourth-generation-owned **soy sauce brewery** and a **traditional sea salt extraction farm** which produces some of Japan's finest sea salt. In between, you visit a local **farmers' market** to inspect the range of fresh produce available.

Today's lunch is not only specially prepared for our group by local chefs using local ingredients, but also is **joined by chefs and farmers talking about their provenance**.

Closing the day, you will stay at a **Japanese style ryokan** in the specially selected **seaside town of Yobuko**.

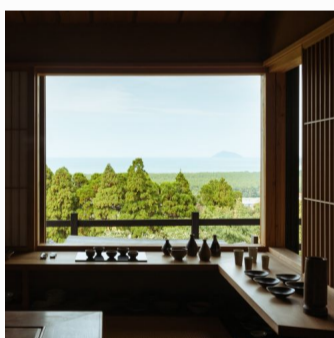


Yobuko (Taiboukaku)



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 5: Karatsu



A great start of the day with an **authentic Japanese-style breakfast** made up of a nutritional feast of grilled fish, miso soup, rice and pickles!

The first stop this morning is **one of the Japan's three historically renowned morning markets**, Yobuko Morning Market. Locals catch and sell fresh and dried seafood, especially squid for which Yobuko is famous. This is a good opportunity to **enjoy the 'buzz' of this regional part of life**. For lunch today, the locally caught calamari prepared as tempura is very fitting.

After lunch, in **Karatsu**, you will visit;

- A **beautifully preserved 19th century villa** showcasing the magnificent traditional architecture, the former Takatori Residence, and
- The **kilns of famous Karatsu-yaki pottery**, highly sought after by Japanese pottery enthusiasts.

Dinner tonight is at a teppanyaki restaurant with juicy **wagyu beef**.



Yobuko (Taiboukaku)



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 6: Arita & Imari

Today, another treat. You visit some **porcelain kilns specializing in highly decorated style using various colours**, the Arita-yaki, and **classic style, habitually using blue and white hues**, the Imari-yaki.

With its elaborate designs and influence from Chinese and Korean potters, **Kyushu porcelain has become highly sought after and popular both in Japan as well as Europe**. Essential for the proper presentation of Japanese food, **the ceramic dish is seen to be as integral a part of the culinary experience** as the food itself.



Later, you will travel on to your next destination **Nagasaki**. During Japan's closed-door period in the 17th and 18th centuries, Nagasaki was the only city open to the rest of the world. In Nagasaki you will **feel the influence of the time when it was visited by Dutch, Portuguese and French missionaries, as well as the impressions left by traders from Europe, China, Korea and Southeast Asia**.

Nagasaki is also **home of one of Japan's largest Chinatowns**. Tonight, you enjoy a silver service **Chinese dinner with a Nagasaki twist**. Another claim to fame of Nagasaki is its **breathtaking night view**. You will drive by **Inasayama Outlook** after dinner, on the way back to your hotel.

 **Nagasaki (Hotel New Nagasaki)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ Day 7: Nagasaki

JttE Special Experience #4!

Nagasaki has one of the largest catch of fish in Japan and today you visit a **local fishmonger**. Here you learn about the local fish trade and see how delicate slices of sashimi are prepared for Nagasaki's restaurants – you will have a chance to taste **the freshest sashimi, prepared right in front of you by the staff**.

Next visit is about history. You will hear about **Thomas Blake Glover who contributed significantly to the development of Japan, especially ship building**, when you visit his magnificent residence and the beautiful **Glover Garden**. You will also tour some the Meiji-era residences of European settlers.

As you walk, you will come upon **Japan's oldest wooden church**, Oura Catholic Church, which was **built by French missionaries in 1865**. It remains a symbol of Nagasaki's long connection with Europe.

Lunch today is at a restaurant specializing in Shippoku cuisine, **a unique Nagasaki cuisine combining Japanese, Chinese and local foods**.

After lunch you have free afternoon and evening. Nagasaki has so much history and cultures. Enjoy the city in your way.

 **Nagasaki (Hotel New Nagasaki)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch**

▼ Day 8: Nagasaki & Unzen



No trip to Nagasaki is complete without a visit to the **Nagasaki Peace Park** and **Atomic Bomb Museum** which mark the events of that tragic day in August 1945.

After lunch, a minibus will take you to your next destination, Unzen on **the fascinating Shimabara Peninsula**.

At Unzen, **a guided walk through Unzen's national park is where you can see active geothermal geysers and mud pools**. You'll see how man has harnessed nature's power to create the heavenly hot springs experience tonight.

At your hotel tonight enjoy a course meal with French style influence **in a historical dining room with a view of the geothermal park**.

 **Unzen (Unzen Kyushu Hotel)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 9: Unzen & Shimabara



You will take **ropeway up to Mt Unzen** which reveals **great view of Ariake Sea and beyond**. Next stop is a **five-storied feudal-era castle on a hilltop**, Shimabara Castle. Here you can learn about **Kyushu's early samurai clans** as well as the curious history of **the Christian rebellion in the 17th century**.

The last stop on the peninsula is Mt Unzen Disaster Memorial Hall, **a unique, high-tech museum which vividly captures the 1991 eruption of Mt Unzen**.

In the late afternoon, we take a **30 minute ferry ride** and cross from Shimabara to **Kumamoto City**.

JttE Special Experience #5!

At dinner **tonight meet the local Japanese chef who is famous nationwide for his creative, beautifully presented dishes**. At his Japanese Italian fusion style restaurant, you can experience **the work he does to revive and promote heritage Kumamoto vegetables** which were slowly disappearing from use.

 **Kumamoto (Hotel Nikko Kumamoto)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**



▼ Day 10: Kumamoto



You will spend a day in the city of **Kumamoto**, in the middle of Kyushu.

The first stop is the symbol of the city, **the splendid Kumamoto Castle, considered one of the three premier castles in Japan**. Originally built in 1607, it was severely damaged by an earthquake in 2016. You will have a rare chance of witnessing its completed restoration work. You will also **visit the nearby sublime Suizenji Japanese Garden** this morning.

This afternoon and evening are free. Kumamoto is a great place for shopping as well as trying many different styles of food from local cuisine to modern western style restaurants. Why not try an **izakaya**, casual Japanese style eatery, where you can taste many different small dishes (like tapas). Our guide will always assist our guests to choose what to do and eat.

 **Kumamoto (Hotel Nikko Kumamoto)**

 **Breakfast**

▼ Day 11: Aso



You start out today by **heading through some of the most scenic parts of Kyushu Island**, the Mt Aso region.

Mt Aso is one of the world's largest calderas, and volcanic activity over the last 300,000 years has created a landscape which is visually striking: **craggy volcanic peaks, dense forests, and lush grasslands**.

We then stop at a local **Kuju Winery for a tasting and lunch**.

Tonight, we will **stay at a ryokan on a secluded mountain side**. This will be **the final chance to experience an onsen on this trip**.

Dinner will be a **kaiseki banquet at your hotel**.

 **Hita (Okuhita Onsen Umehibiki or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ Day 12: Yame



Take a trip to one of **Japan's leading green tea producing areas**, Yame district and it's surrounds.

JttE Special Experience #6!

You **visit a centuries-old tea merchant and be hosted by its fourteenth-generation owner** to learn about the different varieties of green tea and how to **brew the perfect cup of gyokuro (highest quality green tea)**.

Later, we taste-test another famous Japanese beverage – sake. At a **visit to an award-winning local sake brewery, and a personal tour by the brewery staff** will reveal the end-to-end processes of sake production – a special experience to engage in first-hand and ask as many questions as you like.

Although the **2024 Food Tour of Kyushu, Japan in Autumn** is coming to an end **the farewell dinner tonight is truly something special**. Back in Fukuoka, you will have an **exquisite sushi banquet**.

Dinner will bring together all the elements of Kyushu food culture discovered along your journey – from its seas, mountains, rivers, plains and undeniably stunning autumn colours – reaffirming the fantastically diverse nature of Kyushu's food and geography.

 **Fukuoka (The Blossom Hakata Premier)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**



▼ Day 13: Bon Voyage

This morning, you will check out of your hotel after breakfast and your **2024 Autumn Food Tour of Kyushu, Japan in Autumn concludes.**

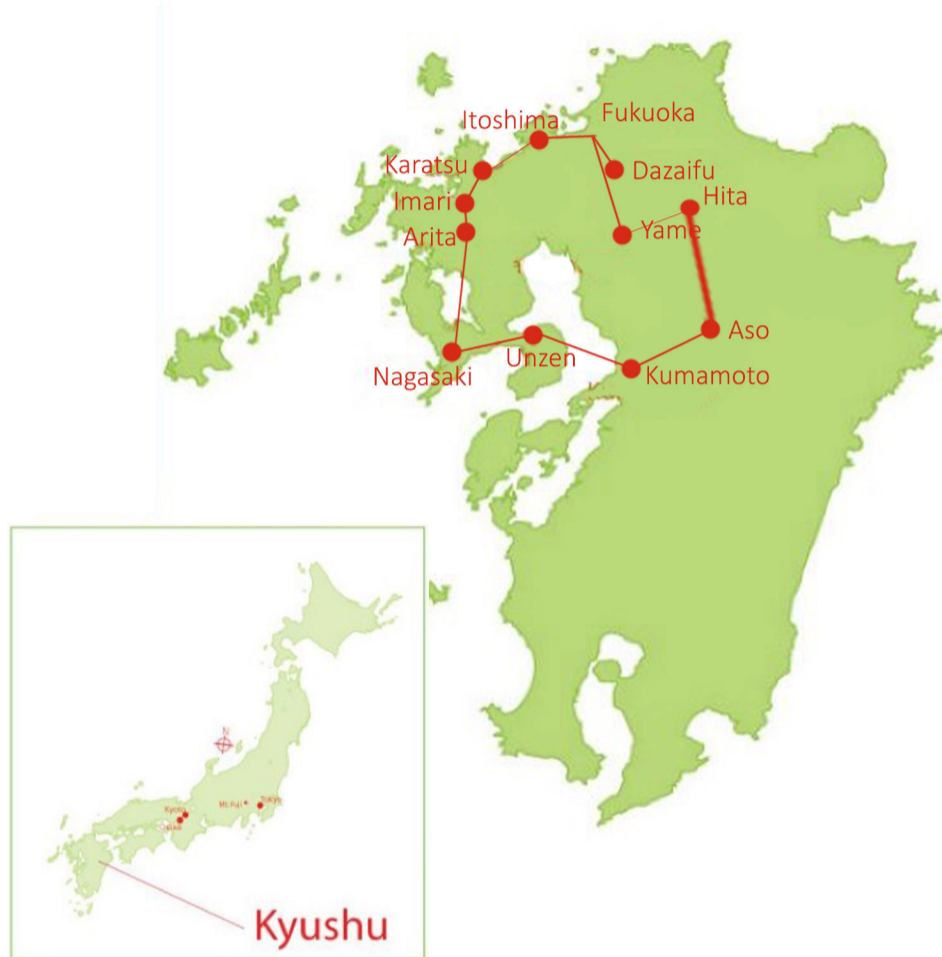
You can fly out from Fukuoka, or return by air or train to the international airports in Tokyo or Osaka.

But it doesn't have to be the end of your dream adventure! Perhaps you might like to linger in Japan for a little longer. We will be delighted to plan your personal post-tour extension to show you a different part of Japan. Please see our Model Extension Itineraries for inspiration.

Note: The cost of an escorted transfer to your departure airport is not included in our Small Group Tours as we found many guests choose to stay in Japan a bit longer, but we will be happy to arrange your transfer to next destination or to exit airport. Please see our FAQ for more details.



Breakfast



DATES & PRICES

2024 Food Tour of Kyushu, Japan in Autumn

TOUR CODE	STARTS	DEPARTS FROM	AVAILABLE PLACES [?]	CURRENCY	PP TWIN SHARE	SINGLE SUPPLEMENT [?]		
GFA-24	Nov 18, 2024	Fukuoka	One Solo	AUD\$	9,050	1,700	ASK A QUESTION	BOOK NOW
GFA-24a	Nov 04, 2024	Fukuoka	Available	AUD\$	9,050	1,700	ASK A QUESTION	BOOK NOW

Choose a different currency at the very top right of the page.



INCLUSIONS

Each guest is personally looked after with one-on-one interactions with our hand-picked, expert tour guides. As part of your investment, this tour includes:

- ✓ First-class wisdom and higher standard of individual care and attention



- ✓ 12 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns)
- ✓ All breakfasts
- ✓ 9 lunches (2 free choice lunches)
- ✓ 9 dinners (2 free choice dinners)
- ✓ Exclusive activity access
- ✓ Airport/station meet & greet on arrival
- ✓ Hotel transfer by public transport on arrival
- ✓ All local transport (train, bus and private minivans)
- ✓ Expert English speaking tour guides (Locally licensed)
- ✓ Cultural activities and entry fees included in itinerary

DISCLAIMER: Unless otherwise stated, this tour does not include the costs of international and domestic airfares, transfers on the last day, travel insurance, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, transport during free time, personal expenses (laundry, internet, telephone, coin lockers etc.) and Visa (if required).

At sushi restaurant in Fukuoka

WHO THIS JAPAN TOUR IS FOR...

This is a perfect tour for people who:

- ▶ Want to increase their knowledge of **Japanese food**
- ▶ Wish to travel **Kyushu** because it is **away from major tourist cities**
- ▶ Like to **interact with artisans and food specialists** in a private setting
- ▶ Enjoy nature especially against the **autumn foliage**
- ▶ Like to experience variety of accommodation style including **ryokans with private bathroom**
- ▶ Like the use of **minivan** which gives you great access and comfort.

REVIEWS



We found this a great tour for foodies, as well as a great all round in Japan for anyone. While the meals were excellent, we were pleased to wasn't just about food, but also about Japan's history, landscape, lan tradition.



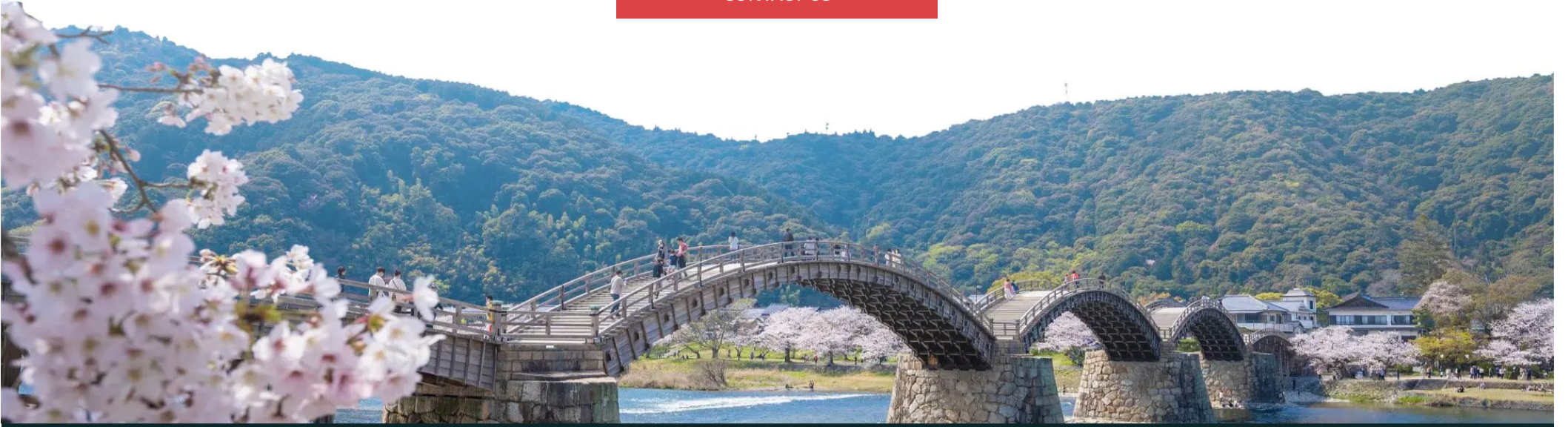
Trip date: 2019

Maureen & Tony Wallace - Australia



Have a question about this tour? Get in touch with our staff directly.

CONTACT US



INFORMATION

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BLOG

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[Northern Kansai Region of Japan](#)
[Top 5 unusual things you can find in Japan](#)
[Japanese home cooking recipes Vol.5 – Okonomiyaki](#)
[Unique accommodation in Japan](#)

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