

DISCOVERY TOUR

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2024 WALKING TOUR OF NAGANO & JAPAN ALPS

This walking tour takes you to some of Japan's most pristine and stunning remote landscapes, with the Japanese Alps high above you and at the peak of autumn too. The brilliant autumn colours will take your breath away on a variety of short walks (8-10km) through the national parks and small villages.

*"Thank you for designing and delivering a great introduction to Japan."
 — William and Judith Lord*



DURATION
8 days



THEME
Autumn Tours, Remote Japan Tours, Walking Tours



GROUP SIZE
Min 4 - Max 8



TOP TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



Zenkoji Temple in Nagano

Founded 642 AD, Zenkoji is one of the most significant and worshipped temples in Japan.



Spiritual walk in Togakushi

You will walk in the sacred forest of Togakushi with Kagami-ike Pond ablaze in autumn foliage.



National Treasure, Matsumoto Castle

Climb up the tower of Matsumoto Castle, one of the few castles that still retain original wooded structure.



Kamikochi

Enjoy the pristine nature surrounded by the mountains of Japan Alps.



Shin-Hotaka Ropeway

Glide over the coloured mountains to reach the viewing deck at the top.



Historical city of Takayama

Amble through the timber clad merchant houses in old streets of Takayama.



SEE FULL TOUR ITINERARY

TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2024 Walking Tour of Nagano & Japan Alps takes you into the heart of the Japanese Alps ablaze with the stunning alpine autumn colours.

Japan is well known for its busy cities and crowded urban areas, but did you know Japan has spectacular **natural scenery** too? And did you know it is renowned for its **pristine wilderness** too? This walking tour of Nagano & Japan Alps will have you walk through these beautiful areas so you can experience them for yourself. Expert local guides lead the intimate group of up to 8 travelers on some of the best day walks in Japan on this 8-day adventure.

This Japan Alps Tour takes you along boardwalks and forested trails through pristine Kamikochi and other outstanding national parks not typically visited by international tourists. You will stay in the national parks, enjoy the natural hot springs resort towns as well as some small regional cities. Truly a tour for those who enjoy pristine countryside without being smothered by tourists.

The Japan Alps walking tour offers easy access, starting in Tokyo and ending in Takayama. We highly recommend you spend a few more days of your own at the beginning and/or the end of the group tour to discover endless attractions of Japan, especially if you are first-time visitors of Japan. 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 Tokyo

Welcome to Japan! On arrival at **Narita** or **Haneda Airport**, you will be met by a Journey to the East guide and escorted to your hotel by an airport shuttle or Narita Express train.

Today is an arrival day and no group program is scheduled. Your hotel is located near glitzy **Ginza** and famous **Tsukiji Market**. Why not take a stroll and relax, ready to start the first full day of your **2024 Walking Tour of Nagano and Japan Alps**.

*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.

 **Tokyo (Park Hotel Tokyo)**

 **No meals**

▼ Day 2: Nagano

A **shinkansen (bullet train)** whisks you away from Tokyo to Nagano in less than 2 hours. **Nagano** is in the center of Japan's main island, Honshu, and **at the base of the Japan Alps**. Here you will;

- Visit the magnificent Zenkoji Temple complex, **a National Treasure and one of the most important pilgrimage sites in Japan**,
- Walk through a 1.8 km approach leading to Zenkoji, **lined with fascinating stores and little restaurants**,
- Join in with some of the many **interactive experiences** as you enjoy the complex,
- Sample **shojinryori, the Buddhist vegetarian cuisine for lunch**, and local produce at an **izakaya restaurant** for dinner.

For the next two nights, you will stay at a **hotel** conveniently located at a central business district of Nagano City.

 **Nagano (Hotel Metropolitan Nagano)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ Day 3: Togakushi



Today's trip takes you to **one of Japan's sacred peaks in the Japan Alps**, Mt. Togakushi with its forests and shrine are **steeped in legend going back some 2,000 years**.



The walk today, in the Japanese Alps, is in an area quite inaccessible until modern times, for hundreds of years Mt. Togakushi was a haven of esoteric Buddhist practice. It was frequented by mountain ascetics. We pass by **Togakushi-jinja Shrine, famous as a power spot** where visitors can absorb the earth's energy of old. Reaching Kagami Ike Pond, **you can walk in some of the best autumn scenery in Japan.**

It is free evening tonight. Enjoy one of the many restaurants around your hotel tonight. (your guide will make suggestions in accordance with your tastes.)

 **Nagano (Hotel Metropolitan Nagano)**

 **Breakfast**

▼ Day 4: Matsumoto



Aboard an **express train**, you head for Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture, **in the heartland of the Japan Alps.**

During Japan's feudal period, **Matsumoto** became an important castle town ruled by a powerful local clan. Today, the city is **popular for its cosmopolitan atmosphere, galleries, and stunning alpine setting.** After arriving Matsumoto, you will;

- Visit **Matsumoto Castle, one of the oldest Japanese structures with five external levels and six internal stories,**
- **Walk through the well-preserved old merchant district, Nakamachi and Nawate-Dori, to see the Namako-walled homes.**

In the afternoon, you will transfer to tonight's destination, Kamikochi via the Norikura Highland, where **you can walk among blazing autumn colours.** It is a very pretty area **dotted with a series of waterfalls.**

You will then arrive at Kamikochi, one of the highlights of the 2024 Walking Tour of Nagano & Japan Alps. **Kamikochi, literally translates as "where the gods descend".** True to its name, it is **an alpine plateau is surrounded by mountain ranges exceeding 3,000 meters** above sea-level.

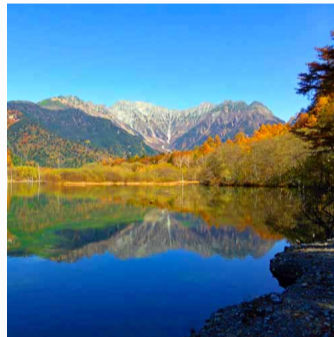
You **stay in a Japanese style room at one of the mountain lodges in the national park** for the next two nights.

(Total walking distance today - about 10-15 km)

 **Kamikochi (Kamikochi Alpen Hotel - Japanese style room or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 5: Kamikochi



In the morning, surrounded by the snow capped Japan alps high above you, **your guide will take you on a 6 km walk along boardwalks, which crisscross mossy ponds and streams, and listen to the wind call out through virgin beech forests ablaze in stunning autumn colours** as you walk to Myojin-ike Pond .

After relaxing back at Kappabashi Bridge area, you can either stroll at your leisure, or if you are up to it, **your guide will be very keen to show another 4 km trek to an outstanding spot, the Taisho-ike Pond.**

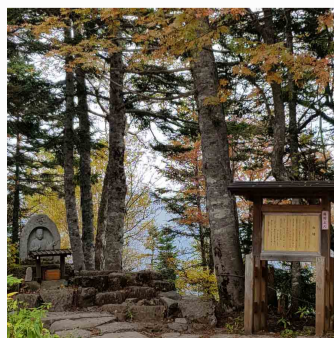
Another night at beautiful Kamikochi.

(Total walking distance today - about 6 -10 km)

 **Kamikochi (Kamikochi Alpen Hotel - Japanese style room or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 6: Shin-Hotaka Ropeway



Heading further into the heart of the Japan Alps by a private minibus you arrive at the Mt Hotaka area to :



- Ride the **Shin Hotaka Ropeway, the longest ropeway in Japan.**
- Stand on the observation deck at the mountain's peak where you will be stunned by the **panoramic views.**
- Take a **guided walk on one of the best trails, to explore the area and enjoy more of the spectacular autumn scenery.**

Your **home tonight is Hirayu Onsen, one of the most popular onsen hot spring hamlets** in Japan. Enjoy relaxing soak after spending a day in the mountain.
(Total walking distance today - about 6 km)

 **Hirayu Onsen (Hirayu no Mori or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 7: Mt Norikura and Takayama



Start the day with another new experience, a traditional Japanese-style breakfast – a beautifully presented and nutritious, it is an experience in itself!

Your private minibus takes you towards **Mt Norikura** for one last chance **to be amongst the autumn foliage and view the snowy peaks of the Japanese Alps.**

In the afternoon, you will transfer to Takayama, heart of the rugged Hida Region. A **guided tour of very historic town of Takayama**, includes;

- **A walk through the very photogenic streets of well-preserved timber merchant houses dating from the late 17th century**, for you to see what this compact, atmospheric town known for,
- Visit Takayama Jinya to see **the history packed, one-time prefectural office for the Tokugawa shogunate in feudal times**, and
- **Walk through the old streets where locals go for many traditional crafts, such as lacquerware, food items, timber crafts and sake** at Sanmachi-suji.

In Takayama, you will stay at an traditional ryokan and enjoy kaiseki dinner, onsen bath and tatami mattress and futon bedding for the last time on the tour.

(Total walking distance today - about 10 km)

 **Takayama (Honjin Hiranoya Bekkan)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ Day 8: Bon Voyage

After breakfast, your **2024 Walking Tour of Nagano & Japan Alps** concludes. Why not spend a little more time in Takayama?

You can return to **Tokyo** or head to Osaka's **Kansai International Airport** for existing Japan.

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 to get some inspiration! Or just out knowledgeable travel consultants.

Note: The cost of your transfer to your departure airport is not included in our Small Group Tours (as we have 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**



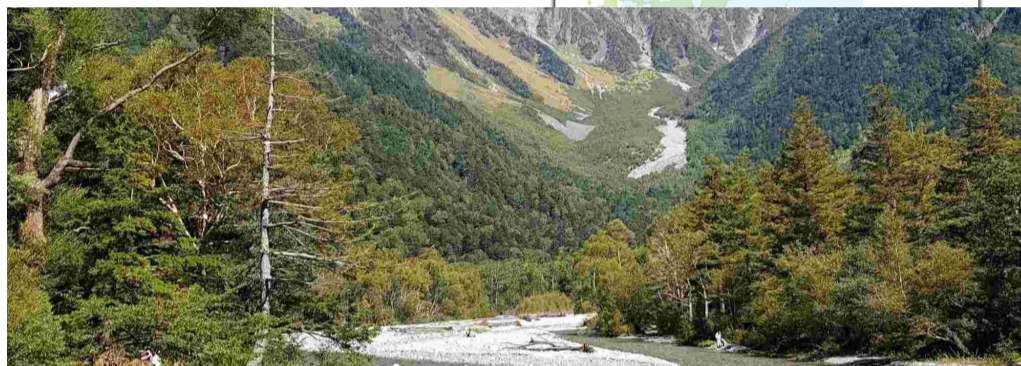


DATES & PRICES

2024 Walking Tour of Nagano & Japan Alps

TOUR CODE	STARTS	DEPARTS FROM	AVAILABLE PLACES <small>?</small>	CURRENCY	PP TWIN SHARE	SINGLE SUPPLEMENT <small>?</small>		
GHA-24	Oct 14, 2024	Tokyo	Available	AUD\$	5,450	1,100	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
- ✓ 7 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns)
- ✓ All breakfasts
- ✓ 2 lunches (4 free choice lunches)
- ✓ 5 dinners (1 free choice dinners)
- ✓ Airport meet & greet on arrival in Tokyo
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person)

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).

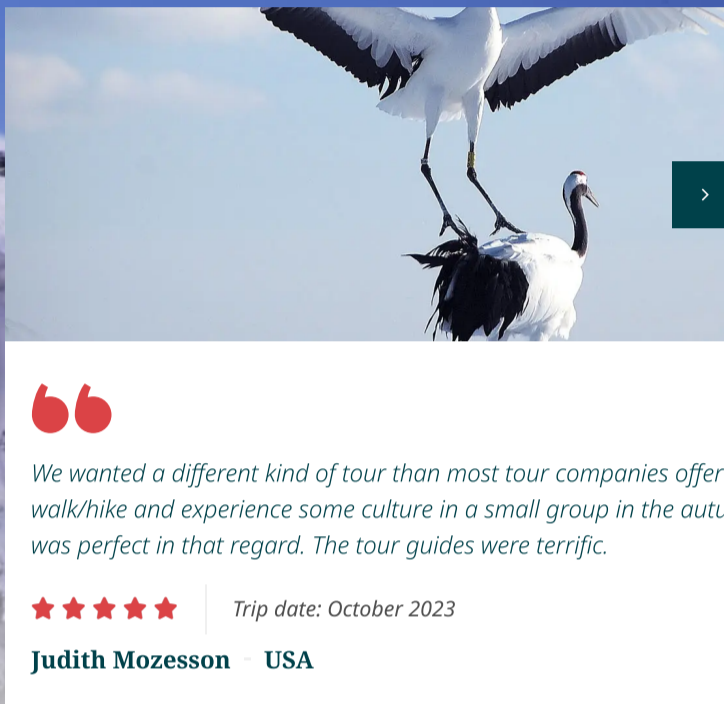


WHO THIS JAPAN TOUR IS FOR...

This is a perfect tour for people who:

- ▶ Want to enjoy short (6-10 km a day) walks amongst **pristine nature and remote part of Japan**
- ▶ Like leisurely walks **without carrying a heavy backpack**
- ▶ Want to see **autumn colours** against natural and rural environment with October departure
- ▶ Like to learn about **traditional cultures by visiting castle, temple, and old towns**
- ▶ Enjoy a **variety and authenticity in accommodation style** from resort style hotel to traditional ryokan

REVIEWS



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We wanted a different kind of tour than most tour companies offered. A walk/hike and experience some culture in a small group in the autumn was perfect in that regard. The tour guides were terrific.

★★★★★ | Trip date: October 2023

Judith Mozesson - USA

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

CONTACT US

INFORMATION

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