

DISCOVERY TOUR

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## 2024 WALKING TOUR OF NAKASENDO AND TAKAYAMA

Unforgettable hiking on the Nakasendo Way – Japan's most scenic walking route.  
The 8-Day guided tour also includes the historic town of Takayama.

*"Our first visit to Japan was way beyond what we expected thanks to the fabulous organisation and information supplied by JttE."*  
– Gary & Isabella Tynan



DURATION  
8 days



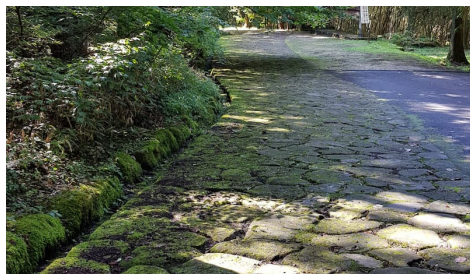
THEME  
Autumn Tours, Remote Japan Tours, Walking Tours



GROUP SIZE  
Min 4 – Max 8



## TOP TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



### Magome

Walk along the ancient cobble stone highway of the Nakasendo Way, just as the samurais did hundreds of years ago.



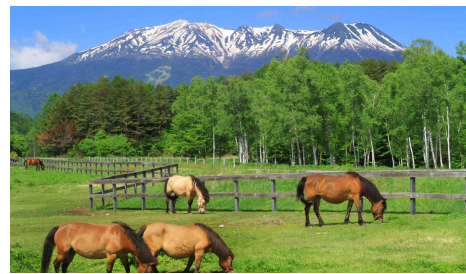
### Autumn colours

Enjoy the peak of autumn colour as you walk the mountains, forests and post-towns of the Nakasendo.



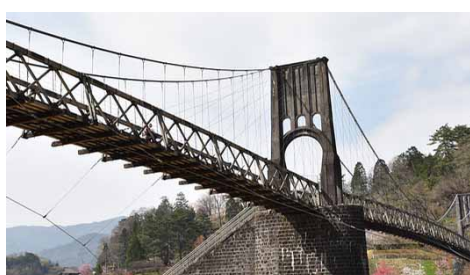
### Takayama

Learn the culture, history and lifestyle of rural Japan at Takayama.



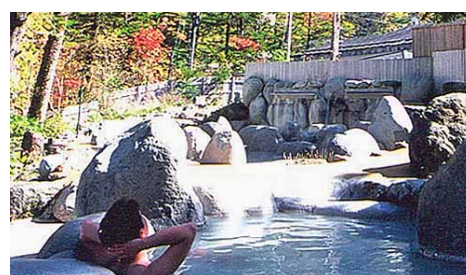
### Kaida Kogen

Join the rare Kiso horses and admire the magnificent Mt Ontake.



### Momosuke Bridge

See the views down the Kiso River as you walk across Japan's longest wooden suspension bridge.



### Onsen

Soak in an onsen, hot spring mineral bath at the end of each day of walking.





# TOUR OVERVIEW

For those who love nature and history, the **2024 Walking Tour of Nakasendo and Takayama** is a great option. The tour will take you on well-paced daily walks along the **Nakasendo Way** – part of Japan's ancient mountain highway between **Tokyo and Kyoto** – travelled by feudal lords, merchants and pilgrims for centuries. This historic walk looks much as it did all those years ago and takes you through mountains covered in **autumn colour** to the picturesque post towns of **Tsumago, Magome and Narai**. Along the way, you'll sample regional cuisine, stay in rustic country-style inns and soak in thermal hot springs.

The tour suits fit and active people who are comfortable hiking up to 6 – 12 km a day. Each of the daily walking tours has been designed to pause to take in the cultural and historical interest spots, traditional architecture and the local way of life – providing unforgettable insights into Japan and its people.

The tour starts in **Nagoya** and ends in **Takayama**, where you will have guided tours and a cooking class. You may care to consider **another group tour** of ours, or a **private itinerary** before or after 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 extension and provide information to suit your interests.

# ITINERARY

📄 DOWNLOAD FULL ITINERARY

▼ Day 1: Arrival in Nagoya

This tour will start at **Japan's 4th largest city, Nagoya** in the central Japan. You can reach here by air or by shinkansen from anywhere in Japan. Journey to the East will offer guidance or arrange your domestic transfer to Nagoya if you require it. It is a great city in its own right. Why not arrive a little early to explore the city?

Tonight you will check in to your hotel, enjoy dinner with your fellow travelers and get to know your guide at a popular local restaurant in Nagoya. Have a good sleep, and be ready to start the first full day of your **2024 Walking Tour of Nakasendo and Takayama**.

\*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. Nagoya is only one and half hour away from Tokyo, and less than one hour from Kyoto or Osaka by shinkansen.


🏨

Nagoya (Nagoya JR Gate Tower Hotel or similar)

🍴

Dinner

▼ Day 2: Magome



You leave the great city of Nagoya behind, take an express train to the small town of **Nakatsugawa** in the **delightful Kiso Valley**.

Today, putting on your walking shoes, you begin the first leg of your hike along the **Nakasendo Way, one of Japan's most scenic routes**. The Nakasendo was one of the old highways connecting Edo (today's Tokyo) with Kyoto, passing through the mountainous terrain of the Kiso Valley. Here, some of the historic post-towns where travelers would stay during their long journeys still stand. And in some places, sections of the trail itself remain, allowing visitors to experience walking the Nakasendo for themselves. Going for a stroll on the cobblestone route and the twinkling of the sunlight through the trees really makes you feel like a traveler in the olden days.

Our first stop is the village of **Magome, awarded a one-star rating by the Michelin Green Guide Japan**. The cobblestone streets are lined with old, lattice-windowed residential houses, museums, tea houses, and old style souvenir shops on both sides, a scene that very much resembles how the post town looked in the Edo period hundreds of years ago.

Here we stay at a charming **minshuku guest house** and sleep in a traditional Japanese room with futon bedding. You will have a private room, (bathroom facility is shared). Tonight, dinner is a hearty family meal at the minshuku.

(Total walking distance today - about 11 km)

🏨

Magome (Tajimaya or similar) - private room and shared bathroom

🍴



▼ Day 3: Magome to Tsumago



After a hearty homemade breakfast at minshuku, you are back on the Nakasendo Way and walk the 7.8km **Magome - Tsumago** trail – one of the most popular sections of the route. **Magome is relatively unique among the post towns** for being located on very precipitous terrain. It is said that the name Magome (written with "horse" and "basket") derives from the fact that travelers were forced to leave their horses at the inns because the road was too steep for horses to climb. You will see the remanence of it on the way. **Tsumago is considered one of the best preserved post towns throughout Japan.**

In the afternoon, you transfer to your hotel in the mountain. Tonight, you sleep in a modern room with private bathroom, still with the old style Japanese hospitality together with **outdoor onsen bath under the gorgeous stars!** Soaking in a natural hot springs bath after a day in the fresh air, you'll soon realise why visiting an onsen remains one of the ultimate pastime for the Japanese!

(Total walking distance today - about 12 km)

 **Tsumago (Fuki no Mori or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 4: Tsumago to Kiso Fukushima



Today, firstly you walk from Tsumago to Nagiso Station dropping by a mountain castle ruins and many other interesting historical monuments. You then cross **Momosuke Bridge, Japan's longest wooden suspension bridge**, designated as Important Notional Cultural Property. It was built in 1922 to transport construction materials to a power plant downstream. Consisting of three stone piers and four spans, it is 247 meters from end to end. It would have been more economical to build the bridge further downstream, where the river is narrower, but Momosuke Fukuzawa, the flamboyant entrepreneur behind both the bridge and the power station, was less concerned with cost than with aesthetics, and built a longer and elegant looking bridge here.

This afternoon, you will take a local train to tonight destination Kiso Fukushima. You will stay at a small onsen ryokan here.

(Total walking distance today - about 7 km)

 **Kiso Fukushima (Sarashinaya)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 5: Kiso Fukushima to Narai



A local train transports you to the township of **Yabuhara**, where you begin your hike along a high mountain pass covered in autumn colour and down a valley to the village of **Narai**.

Around Yabuhara Station is mainly residential. As you walk along the old Nakasendo, the main road of this quiet town, the buildings slowly begin to age. Every now and then remnants of Yabuhara's post-town past pop up, like **shops selling the town's specialty, orokugushi combs.**

From here, the trail grows steeper and steeper as it approaches Torii Pass. You stop from time to time as the woods part to reveal splendid scenery of the town below. A third of the way along the trail is the outstanding **Ontake Shrine**, dedicated to Mt. Ontake, one of **Japan's most spiritual mountains**. Weary travelers would have stopped here to pray and rest a spell before continuing their journeys. On clear days, you can even see the peak of Mt. Ontake across the valley.

After crossing the highest point of the trail, Torii Pass (1,197m), it slowly descend towards **Narai**. Narai is another beautifully-preserved post-town where you have time to **explore its charming streetscape at your leisure** or simply relax in your minshuku-style accommodation.

Alternatively you can visit a nearby town of Hirakawa, to see its **local traditional craft lacquerware.**

Dinner will be mountain cuisine at our minshuku made fresh that day from locally-sourced produce. Another rustic stay in a tatami room and shared bathroom.



(Total walking distance today - about 10 km)



Kaida Kogen (Tutaya Tokinoyado Kazari) - private room and shared bathroom



Breakfast, Dinner

▼ Day 6: Kaida Kogen



Today, you will hop on a **private minibus** and head to **Kaida Kogen (highlands)**. It is a plateau, 1,100 to 1,300 meters above sea level, and the birthplace of Kiso horses. At around 50 hectares in area, Kiso Horse Land is a place **where the dwindling population of Kiso horses are protected and bred**. Beautiful views of the majestic Mt. Ontake can be enjoyed from various locations around the highlands.

In the afternoon, you will continue the scenic drive to your final destination, **Takayama**. An atmospheric town surrounded by mountains and beautiful autumn foliage, Takayama is known for its **beautifully preserved streets of merchant houses dating from the late 17th century**. You will have a most memorable evening walking tour of the old town before you have a chance to choose your dinner at some of Takayama's local restaurants.



Takayama (Tokyu Stay Hida Takayama Musubi no Yu or similar)



Breakfast

▼ Day 7: Takayama and Hida Furukawa



Takayama's 200-year old **Morning Market** is your first stop to check out its farm-fresh produce and handmade crafts. **Hida region** where Takayama is located retains a lot of **rural features** outside the town centre, and that is where you spend the rest of today. You will be **foraging in the fields** and enjoy a **cooking lesson from a local lady**. The rest of the afternoon is free for you enjoy the relaxing and nostalgic Hida countryside.

If you are interested in more nature walks, we recommend a guided walk along the **Utsue Forty-Eight Waterfalls**. The other active option is a **half-day guided cycling** through rice paddy of Hida region. Or you may simply like to stroll around the old merchant district and wander through its old buildings converted into small museums, boutique sake breweries and craft shops selling high-quality woodwork, lacquerware and textiles.

Tonight you will have a farewell dinner enjoying Takayama specialty, **Hida wagyu beef** at a yakiniku restaurant.



Takayama (Tokyu Stay Hida Takayama Musubi no Yu or similar)



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 8: Bon Voyage

This morning after breakfast, your **2024 Walking Tour of Nakasendo and Takayama** concludes.

You may choose to stay in Takayama a little longer, or take a train to Kyoto, Osaka, Nagoya. You can also take a local coach to Matsumoto or Kanazawa. The choices are endless.

If you would like to continue your travel in Japan, we will be delighted to plan your personal post-tour extension to show you a different part of Japan. Please see our **Extension Model Itineraries** for inspiration!

Note: The cost of 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 Walking Tour of Nakasendo and Takayama

TOUR CODE	STARTS	DEPARTS FROM	AVAILABLE PLACES ?	CURRENCY	PP TWIN SHARE	SINGLE SUPPLEMENT ?		
GHC-24	Nov 08, 2024	Nagoya	Fully Booked	AUD\$	4,950	500	ASK A QUESTION	WAIT-LIST

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
- ✓ 1 lunches (5 free choice lunches)
- ✓ 6 dinners (1 free choice dinners)
- ✓ 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).



local crafts at Magome

## WHO THIS JAPAN TOUR IS FOR...

This is a perfect tour for people who:

- ▶ Want to enjoy short (6-12 km a day) walks amongst **pristine nature and historic part of Japan**
- ▶ Is interested in the history and sceneries of the **Nakasendo Way**
- ▶ Like leisurely walks **without carrying a heavy backpack**
- ▶ Want to see **autumn colours** against natural and rural environment with November departure
- ▶ Like to learn about **traditional cultures by visiting castle, temple, and old towns**
- ▶ Enjoy **a variety and authenticity in accommodation style** from city hotels to traditional ryokan and rustic minshuku

## REVIEWS



*Our first trip to Japan was an amazing experience. It was the perfect viewing, active walking, trying Japanese food and accommodation style. We enjoyed the Japanese history, culture and environment from Journey to the East for definitely book another active tour with them in the future.*



Trip date: 2019

**Neil & Sue Collins** - **Australia**





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

CONTACT US

INFORMATION

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BLOG

- Choosing the right tour of Japan
- 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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