

SIGNATURE TOUR

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2025 AUTUMN TOUR OF JAPAN'S WILD WEST

See some of the most remote and rugged areas of Japan in the National Parks and the Japan Alps including pristine Kamikochi in autumn. A tour to experience the dramatic landscapes of Japan from its tallest mountains to the deepest gorge.

"Wild West Tour was wonderful. A lot of thoughts put into seeing so much diversity..."
 — Jeff & Di Inglis



DURATION
 12 days



THEME
 Autumn Tours, Remote Japan Tours



GROUP SIZE
 Min 2 - Max 8

TOP TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



Matsumoto Castle and old merchant district

Climb up the tower of Matsumoto Castle, one of Japan's premier castles and designated a national treasure



Pristine Kamikochi

Have guided walks of Kamikochi, a breathtakingly beautiful part of Chubu Sangaku National Park



Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route

Travel through multi-modal transport to cross the Japan Alps from Nagano to Toyama and view the mighty Kurobe Dam



UNESCO World Heritage listed Gokayama

Not only visit but stay overnight at a thatched-roof traditional house in the farming village



Eiheiji temple complex

Join hundreds of young monks at Eiheiji, one of the most significant Zen monasteries in Japan



Kenrokuen Japanese Garden in Kanazawa

Amble through one of the best Japanese gardens in the historical city of Kanazawa

[SEE FULL TOUR ITINERARY](#)

TOUR OVERVIEW

2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West focuses on the central and the Japan Sea side of Honshu Island. This 12-day journey takes you away from the popular but crowded tourist centres to travel in Japan's surprisingly pristine countryside in the gorgeous alpine fall foliage around the Japan Alps.

In addition to the **Kamikochi** and **Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route**, which are two of the most naturally beautiful sites in Japan, the tour includes less-known locations in Toyama and Fukui Prefectures. In particular, the magnificent **Eiheiji Temple** complex and **Tojinbo Cliff** are so culturally significant yet difficult to be accessed by cookie-cutter style tours. They are sure to capture the imagination of any Japan return visitors. This unique Japan tour is suited to people who love the outdoors and authentic experiences.

The 2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West **starts in Tokyo and ends in Kyoto**. If you are a first-timer to Japan, we recommend you spend extra time before and/or after the tour and explore these most popular cities.

ITINERARY

[DOWNLOAD FULL ITINERARY](#)

▼ Day 1: Arrival



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.

Today is an arrival day and no group program is scheduled. Your hotel is in the middle of Shinjuku, a popular Tokyo suburb. Why not stroll around **Denkigai** (electric appliance town) or **Shinjuku Gyoen Park**, relax and be ready to start the first full day of your **2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West**.

*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 (subject to availability).

 **Tokyo (JR Kyushu Hotel Blossom Shinjuku or similar)**

 **No meals**

▼ Day 2: 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 in Matsumoto, you will visit **Japan's oldest wooden castle**, the impressive **Matsumoto Castle**. The castle is one of the nation's five castles **designated national treasures**. Still in impeccable original condition, you will explore its wooden interiors and climb to the top of its distinctive black-and-white turret.

In the afternoon, you will transfer to the base for the next couple of days, Kamikochi by private minivan.

 **Kamikochi (Kamikochi Alpen Hotel or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 3: Kamikochi





Kamikochi translates as “**where the gods descend**” and it is one of the highlights of this tour. True to its name, the **mountain ranges exceeding 3,000 meters** above sea-level tower over the perfect Kamikochi alpine plateau. Here you take a most pleasurable **walk along boardwalks**, which crisscross mossy ponds and streams that reflect the giant mountains that surround them. You will wind through virgin beech forests where the altitude makes them stunning in their coats of many colours.

Stay another night in Kamikochi.

 **Kamikochi (Kamikochi Alpen Hotel or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**


▼ Day 4: Shinano Omachi

After the active walks in the pristine nature of Kamikochi, you have a somewhat relaxing, sightseeing day, today.

On the way to Shinano Omachi, the starting point of the **Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route** you stop at some vantage points to appreciate the great views of the area surrounded by **the Japan Alps** mountains. Today you will visit Shinano Omachi, a post town along the old highway back in the Edo Era. It is a sleepy town but with a lot of little gems to be discovered. You will have an afternoon guided tour of this town.

Tonight, you will stay at an alpine resort hotel with facilities such as an indoor pool and an onsen bath. Also, enjoy the French-style dinner using local ingredients at the hotel tonight.

 **Shinano Omachi (ANA Holiday Inn Resort Shinano-omachi Kuroyon or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ Day 5: Tateyama Kurobe Alpine Route



An action-packed day today. You travel along the **Tateyama-Kurobe Alpine Route** across the mountains and valleys by a **multi-modal combination of train, bus, cable car, ropeway and even a trolley bus!**

Along the way you visit a sacred Shinto mountain, traverse a deep gorge, check out the impressive **Kurobe Dam** and circuit **Japan's largest non-active crater** – the Tateyama caldera.

You will have plenty of opportunities to get out and explore on foot, enjoy the autumn foliage, and take in the high snowy peaks of the mountains around you. This is where the true value of Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West lies.

Arriving at **Toyama City** on the other side of the Alpine Route, you have a dinner of Toyama regional cuisine using the highly praised fresh seafood of the Japan Sea.

 **Toyama (JAL City Toyama or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 6: Kurobe Gorge



The charming “**Torokko Train**” takes you across the mighty **Kurobe Gorge, Japan's deepest river valley.**

Originally the "Torokko Train" was used to transport the workers building the massive Kurobe Dam. The Kurobe Gorge Railway now winds through the spectacular autumn-coloured mountain scenery. You will step out of the vintage carriages and take a walk along the gorge. Have your cameras ready for some stunning shots of mountains covered in their autumn leaves.

Tonight you will stay at a traditional ryokan in Unazaki Onsen town, and enjoy a kaiseki banquet and onsen bath.

 **Unazuki Onsen (Enraku or similar)**



▼ Day 7: Shogawa and Gokayama



You start on a morning walk with your guide to capture the images of autumn sceneries like the main image of this tour looking at Yamabiko Bridge at Unazuki Onsen.

After breakfast, you will go to another stunning valley, the **Shogawa Valley**. Upon arrival, you cruise the Shogawa River to appreciate the enormity of the valley's autumn foliage fully.

You then visit a wood-carving centre at **Inami** where you can **watch artisans shape magnificent pieces**, applying the traditional art forms that go back to the 17th century. Later, you witness the carving used in the architecture of the local temple, **Zuisenji Temple**. It is breathtakingly beautiful.

Next is the charming rural village of UNESCO-listed **Gokayama**, where you stay in one of the village's original **thatched-roof farmhouses**. Known as gassho-zukuri (meaning "hands clasped together in prayer"), these steeply slanted roofed homes were **built to withstand the region's heavy snowfalls**.

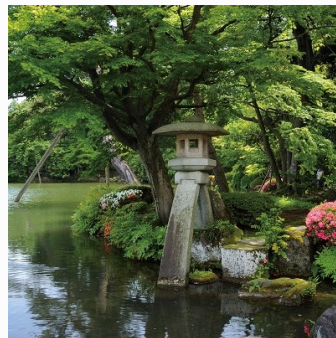
Tonight, you will have the chance to experience sleeping in the historical building*. Enjoy authentic home-style Japanese hospitality.

*Note these houses have private rooms and a shared bathroom facility.

🏠 Gokayama (Nakaya and Goyomon or similar)

🍴 Breakfast, Dinner

▼ Day 8: Kanazawa



Having experienced a homemade Japanese-style breakfast at the minshuku, you transfer to the city of **Kanazawa** this morning.

Once you arrive at Kanazawa, on the west coast of the Sea of Japan, you have a guided tour of this city, learning its historical lineage as a wealthy castle town steeped in **samurai culture**.

This city offers an impressive range of architectural and cultural attractions. In Kanazawa, you will visit **Kenrokuen Japanese Gardens**, arguably the best Japanese gardens in Japan.

For dinner tonight you will enjoy premium **wagyu beef** cooked in front of you at a **Teppanyaki** restaurant.

🏠 Kanazawa (Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel or similar)

🍴 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 9: Kanazawa



Continue exploring culturally rich **Kanazawa**. This morning, you will visit;

- The **Nagamachi District**, where the region's daimyo lords and their samurai once resided, and
- **Omicho Market** and see myriads of local seafood and vegetables, the foundation of rich local food culture.

The afternoon and evening have been set aside for you to take yourself exploring this charming city. You may like to wander the backstreets of Kanazawa or admire temples and fabulous galleries. Alternatively, check out the craft shops selling **Kaga-style kimono fabrics** and gilded **lacquerware** or pause at a local **sake brewery**.

🏠 Kanazawa (Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel or similar)

🍴 Breakfast

▼ Day 10: Fukui





Heading further west on the Japan Sea coast, you reach **Fukui Prefecture**, where you will witness another wild natural landscape.

One of the least populated areas of Japan, Fukui is well known for its rugged coastline and the magnificent **Eiheiji Temple**. Highlights of today are;

- The dramatic cliff of **Tojinbo**, and
- The vast **Eiheiji Temple** complex consisting of some 70 buildings.

Tonight, you will stay at a **shukubo lodging** where pilgrims to Eiheiji stay. Enjoy unique experiences such as Buddhist vegetarian dinner and breakfast, and unforgettable early morning service at Eiheiji (optional).

 **Eiheiji (Hakujukan or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 11: Kyoto



This morning express trains will sweep you away to **Kyoto**, the most iconic of cities.

Kyoto is the cultural heart of Japan and the guardian of many of its ancient traditions. Originally made capital in 794, present-day Kyoto offers an endless range of traditional craft shops, refined restaurants, ancient temples and Shinto shrines.

Upon arrival in Kyoto, you will have a **guided tour** of some of the iconic sites of Kyoto.

Tonight, you have a farewell Japanese dinner at a traditional **shabu shabu** restaurant in Kyoto.

 **Kyoto (Cross Hotel Kyoto or similar)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 12: Bon Voyage

This morning you will check out of your hotel after breakfast and your **2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West** concludes.

You can return to **Tokyo** by bullet train or air to fly home or depart from Osaka's **Kansai International Airport**.

Perhaps you might like to linger in Japan for a little longer. We will be delighted to plan your post-tour extension and to show you another different part of Japan. Please see our Model Extension Itineraries on Private Tours page 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 the airport or your next destination. Please see our FAQ for more details.



 **Breakfast**





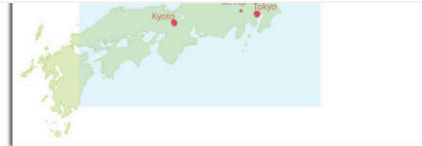
DATES & PRICES

2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West

Show Prices in:

Australian Dollars (AUD\$) ▾

TOUR CODE	START DATE	START CITY	AVAILABLE PLACES	CURRENCY	PP TWIN SHARE	SINGLE SUPPLEMENT		
GAW-25	21/10/2025	Tokyo	Available	AUD\$	\$8,950	\$1,200	ASK A QUESTION	BOOK NOW



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
- ✓ 11 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns)
- ✓ All breakfasts
- ✓ 2 lunches and 9 dinners
- ✓ Exclusive activity access
- ✓ 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 see autumn colours against **pristine nature and remote parts of Japan**
- ▶ Enjoy visiting magnificent **traditional architecture** such as castles, temples, gardens and farmhouses without the mass of tourists
- ▶ Wish to learn the traditional and modern lifestyle of the **rural part of Japan**
- ▶ Be up-close and **interact with locals** through public transport and local boutique accommodation
- ▶ Enjoy a **variety of accommodation styles** from resort-style hotels to traditional ryokan and rustic farmhouse
- ▶ Like tours **designed with physically and intellectually active 55+** travellers in mind



If you want to experience Japan from a slightly different perspective in crowded destinations, then definitely consider Journey to the East.



Trip date: October 2023

Garry O'Brien - Australia

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

CONTACT US

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