

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2025 AUTUMN TOUR OF JAPAN'S WILD WEST (SIGNATURE)

Start: Tuesday, 21 October 2025 from Tokyo
Finish: Saturday, 1 November 2025 at Kyoto
Duration: 12 days
Group size: 8 people
Cost estimate: AUD \$8,950 per person
Single supplement: AUD \$1,200 per person
Ref: GAW-25

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 Eihei-ji 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.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Tue 21/10/2025	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>*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).</p>	No meals	Hotel Century Southern Tower [Southern Tower Twin/King]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
2	Wed 22/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Matsumoto	<p>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.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you will transfer to the base for the next couple of days, Kamikochi by private minivan.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kamikochi Alpen Hotel [Twin room]
3	Thu 23/10/2025	Guided tour of Kamikochi	<p>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.</p> <p>Stay another night in Kamikochi.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kamikochi Alpen Hotel [Twin room]
4	Fri 24/10/2025	Guided tour of Shinano Omachi	<p>After the active walks in the pristine nature of Kamikochi, you have a somewhat relaxing, sightseeing day, today.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	ANA Holiday Inn Resort Shinano-omachi Kuroyon [Superior Twin with balcony]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
5	Sat 25/10/2025	Guided tour of Tateyama/Kurobe	<p>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!</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Hotel JAL City Toyama [Superior Twin]
6	Sun 26/10/2025	Guided tour of Kurobe Gorge	<p>The charming "Torokko Train" takes you across the mighty Kurobe Gorge, Japan's deepest river valley.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tonight you will stay at a traditional ryokan in Unazaki Onsen town, and enjoy a kaiseki banquet and onsen bath.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Unazuki Onsen Enraku [Japanese style room with futon beddings and view of Kurobe Gorge]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
7	Mon 27/10/2025	Guided tour of Shogawa Valley and Gokayama	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tonight, you will have the chance to experience sleeping in the historical building*. Enjoy authentic home-style Japanese hospitality.</p> <p>*Note these houses have private rooms and a shared bathroom facility.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Gassho Minshuku (Japanese style B&B) Nakaya and Goyomon [Japanese style room with shared facility]
8	Tue 28/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>Having experienced a homemade Japanese-style breakfast at the minshuku, you transfer to the city of Kanazawa this morning.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For dinner tonight, you will enjoy premium wagyu beef cooked in front of you at a Teppanyaki restaurant.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
9	Wed 29/10/2025	Guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>Continue exploring culturally rich Kanazawa. This morning, you will visit;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. <p>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.</p>	Breakfast	Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]
10	Thu 30/10/2025	Guided tour of Fukui	<p>Heading further west on the Japan Sea coast, you reach Fukui Prefecture, where you will witness another wild natural landscape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of the least populated areas of Japan, Fukui is well known for its rugged coastline and the magnificent Eihei-ji Temple. Highlights of today are; - The dramatic cliff of Tojinbo, and <p>The vast Eihei-ji Temple complex consisting of some 70 buildings. Tonight, you will stay at a shukubo lodging where pilgrims to Eihei-ji stay. Enjoy unique experiences such as Buddhist vegetarian dinner and breakfast, and unforgettable early morning service at Eihei-ji (optional).</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Hakujukan [Japanese Western Room]
11	Fri 31/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Kyoto	<p>This morning, express trains will sweep you away to Kyoto, the most iconic of cities.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Tonight, you have a "farewell Japan" dinner with the group for the last time. It is at a small local restaurant who beautifully presents the Kyoto cuisine with modern twist.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
12	Sat 1/11/2025	Departure	<p>This morning, you will check out of your hotel after breakfast and your 2025 Autumn Tour of Japan's Wild West concludes.</p> <p>You can return to Tokyo by bullet train or air to fly home or depart from Osaka's Kansai International Airport.</p> <p>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!</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast	
Inclusions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) ■ All breakfasts ■ 2 lunches and 9 dinners ■ Airport meet & greet in Tokyo ■ Hotel transfer by public transport on arrival ■ All transport stated in the itinerary ■ Exclusive activity access ■ Expert English speaking tour guides (locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees included in itinerary ■ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person) 		
Exclusions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International and domestic airfare (unless otherwise stated) ■ Transfer on the last day ■ Travel insurance ■ Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (except the 1st drink at each meal) ■ Tips and gratuities (not routinely expected in Japan) ■ Transport during free time ■ Personal expenses (laundry, coin-locker, internet, telephone etc.) ■ Visa (if required) 		