

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2026 AUTUMN LEAVES TOUR OF JAPAN (COMFORT)

Start: Sunday, 15 November 2026 from Tokyo
Finish: Saturday, 28 November 2026 at Kyoto
Duration: 14 days
Group size: 8 people
Cost estimate: AUD \$13,940 per person
Single supplement: AUD \$3,450 per person
Ref: GAL-26

TOUR OVERVIEW

Stroll through Japan’s most iconic cultural sites, framed by the vibrant reds and golds of autumn. The 2026 Autumn Leaves Tour of Japan is thoughtfully designed to let you relax and savour every moment in comfort.

This 14-day luxury autumn tour offers a perfect blend of seasonal beauty, cultural depth, and premium service. Highlights include guided visits to Japan’s most celebrated gardens - from the classical serenity of Rikugi-en in Tokyo, to the artistic landscape of the Hakone Museum garden, the famed Kenroku-en in Kanazawa, and Kyoto’s iconic temple gardens ablaze with autumn colour.

Enjoy seamless travel via bullet trains and private transport, and unwind each evening in 4+ star western-style accommodation. With most meals included and expert guides by your side, this is one of the most enriching and memorable luxury autumn tours of Japan.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Sun 15/11/2026	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Welcome to Japan! Upon arrival at Narita or Haneda International Airport, you will be warmly greeted by a Journey to the East guide and escorted by private transfer to your hotel.</p> <p>Today is a flexible arrival day with no scheduled group activities, allowing you time to relax and recover from your journey. Your accommodation is set in an elegant hotel tucked away in a tranquil corner of Tokyo, away from the city's hustle and bustle. Surrounded by a beautifully landscaped Japanese garden, it offers a peaceful setting to begin your journey.</p> <p>Why not take a quiet stroll beneath the vibrant maple leaves or simply unwind and soak in the calm atmosphere? Tomorrow marks the official start of your 2026 Autumn Leaves Tour of Japan - a journey rich in seasonal beauty, cultural encounters, and local charm.</p> <p>Many guests choose to arrive a day or two early to gently adjust to the new time zone. If you'd like to extend your stay, we'd be happy to arrange additional nights at the same hotel, subject to availability.</p>	No meals	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Prime Superior King / Twin City View]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
2	Mon 16/11/2026	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>You'll begin your day with a short orientation from your guide to help you feel comfortable and ready to explore this exciting city.</p> <p>Today, you'll discover the elegant Marunouchi area, located between the spacious Imperial Palace Plaza and the beautifully restored, 100-year-old Tokyo Station. Marunouchi, which means "inside the moat," was once part of Edo Castle - now the Emperor's residence - and is Tokyo's most prestigious business district. It's the perfect place to see a mix of old Japan and modern life. In Marunouchi, you'll see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hibiya Park, which is one of the top autumn colour sites in Tokyo, - The Imperial Palace Plaza with 2,000 impressive black pine trees, a whole world away from the business district of Marunouchi, - Tree-lined Marunouchi streets and old buildings, which marked the modernisation of Japan in the 19th century, and - The red-brick façade of Tokyo Station, one of the city's most striking pieces of architecture against the glass and steel of neighbouring skyscrapers. <p>After strolling the Marunouchi area, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, where you'll dine among Japanese office workers - an authentic Tokyo experience.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you'll visit the serene Rikugi-en Japanese Garden, a well-known spot for viewing autumn leaves.</p> <p>Your day ends with a special "Welcome to Japan" dinner at hotel hotel.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Prime Superior King / Twin City View]

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3	Tue 17/11/2026	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>On your second day in Tokyo, you'll experience a thoughtful blend of traditional charm and modern sophistication.</p> <p>Begin your day with a morning walk along the Ginkgo tree avenue of Meiji Jingu Gaien, where golden leaves line the boulevard in breathtaking symmetry during autumn - a picture-perfect and peaceful start to your Tokyo exploration. Then visit the serene and majestic Meiji Jingu Shrine, nestled in a tranquil forest oasis that feels a world away from the city - an inspiring place of history, spirituality, and natural beauty.</p> <p>Afterwards, take a stroll along Omotesando Avenue, often called Tokyo's "Champs-Élysées," where tree-lined streets are home to striking modern architecture and the world's most prestigious fashion houses. You will have a casual cafe lunch here. Next, immerse yourself in the elegance of the Nezu Museum, designed by renowned architect Kengo Kuma, where you'll wander through the contemplative Japanese garden and admire a superb collection of Japanese and East Asian art. End your day with a drive through the dynamic Shibuya Scramble Square - an exhilarating symbol of Tokyo's energy and modern edge.</p> <p>This evening, unwind with a more relaxed dining experience at one of the many restaurants in Tokyo.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Prime Superior King / Twin City View]
4	Wed 18/11/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Hakone	<p>Today, journey to the scenic mountain town of Hakone, a peaceful retreat known for its natural beauty, art, and traditional culture.</p> <p>Your day begins with a visit to the spectacular Hakone Museum of Art, with over 200 Japanese maple trees with red autumn leaves at this time of year. Then, enjoy panoramic views of Lake Ashi and the mountains at the Narukawa Art Museum, home to an exceptional collection of modern Japanese-style paintings.</p> <p>After a day of art and nature, you'll check in to a traditional ryokan, where you can relax in a soothing hot spring bath and enjoy the calm of Japanese hospitality. In the evening, a beautifully presented kaiseki dinner awaits - a multi-course feast that celebrates local ingredients and the art of seasonal dining, served in the serene atmosphere of your inn.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hakone Nanase [Superior Twin Room]

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5	Thu 19/11/2026	Guided tour of Hakone and transfer to Tokyo	<p>Start your day with a traditional Japanese breakfast, a nourishing and beautifully balanced meal featuring grilled fish, warm miso soup, delicate tofu, steamed rice, and seasonal pickles.</p> <p>After breakfast, enjoy a gentle stroll through the inspiring Hakone Open-Air Museum, where world-renowned sculptures by artists such as Henry Moore and Rodin are displayed against the backdrop of Hakone's natural beauty. You will also visit the sublime Okada Museum of Art.</p> <p>Following a relaxing morning immersed in art and nature, you'll board the comfortable bullet train for a smooth journey back to Tokyo. Upon arrival, the remainder of the afternoon and evening is yours to enjoy at your own pace. You might choose to venture out and sample one of Tokyo's countless dining options, or simply unwind with a quiet evening at your hotel. Your guide will be happy to offer recommendations and assist with directions if needed.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Prime Superior King / Twin City View]
6	Fri 20/11/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>Travel in the comfort of a Green Class seat on the Shinkansen (bullet train) along Japan's scenic countryside to your next destination, Kanazawa, a cultural gem nestled on the Sea of Japan coast. Once a prosperous castle town, Kanazawa is rich in history, with deep roots in samurai tradition, refined arts, and exquisite preserved districts that offer a window into old Japan.</p> <p>Here, you'll explore the renowned Kenrokuen Garden, a 17th-century masterpiece considered one of the three finest gardens in the country, celebrated for its seasonal beauty, flowing streams, and perfectly placed pines. You'll also have the opportunity to step inside an authentic tea house, where you'll experience the quiet grace of a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, led by a master of the art.</p> <p>This evening, enjoy the flavours of Kanazawa's regional cuisine at a carefully selected restaurant.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Nikko Kanazawa [Comfort or Stylish Twin]

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7	Sat 21/11/2026	Guided tour of Gokayama and Kanazawa	<p>Today, embark on a scenic day trip by private minivan to the atmospheric mountain village of Gokayama, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its cultural significance and timeless beauty - particularly stunning in autumn, when the surrounding hills are ablaze with crimson and gold foliage.</p> <p>Step back in time as you explore this secluded rural hamlet, celebrated for its gassho-zukuri farmhouses - distinctive, centuries-old wooden homes with steeply pitched thatched roofs, ingeniously crafted to withstand the region's heavy winter snow. Walking through this remarkably preserved village feels like entering a living tapestry of Japan's pastoral past, where you'll hear compelling stories of local life, seasonal traditions, and the architectural ingenuity passed down through generations.</p> <p>During your visit, engage in a traditional washi paper-making workshop, a hands-on experience that reveals the skill and patience behind this revered Japanese craft, which has been practised here for centuries. For lunch, savour a comforting bowl of handmade soba noodles, a regional specialty prized for its delicate texture and nutty flavour.</p> <p>Upon your return to Kanazawa, you'll visit a family-run Kutani yaki kiln, where artisans continue the legacy of this vibrant porcelain tradition. Originating in the 17th century, Kutani ware is known for its bold use of colour - especially deep greens, blues, and reds - and intricate designs depicting nature, folklore, and classical motifs. This visit offers a rare opportunity to witness the artistry behind one of Japan's most iconic ceramic styles.</p> <p>Conclude this culturally immersive day with a luxurious teppanyaki dinner, where tender, marbled Wagyu beef is masterfully grilled before you - an unforgettable culinary experience that perfectly pairs tradition with indulgence.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Nikko Kanazawa [Comfort or Stylish Twin]

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8	Sun 22/11/2026	Guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>This morning, begin with a walk through Nagamachi, Kanazawa's beautifully preserved samurai district, where stone-paved lanes and earthen walls whisper stories of Japan's feudal past. Visit a former samurai residence, now a curated museum, to admire refined architecture and learn about the lifestyle and legacy of the warrior class during Kanazawa's golden age.</p> <p>Next, explore Japan's traditional beverage at a prestigious sake brewery with over 390 years of history. Discover the artistry behind premium sake brewing and enjoy a tasting of carefully selected seasonal and limited-edition varieties rarely found outside Japan.</p> <p>Then, dive into the vibrant atmosphere of Omicho Market, a bustling local institution since the Edo period. As you browse colourful stalls, your guide will highlight unique regional ingredients before you savour a freshly prepared market lunch showcasing local flavours.</p> <p>The rest of the afternoon and evening is free for you to explore Kanazawa's proud artisanal heritage, from lacquerware and Kaga silk dyeing to exquisite gold leaf craftsmanship - timeless traditions that continue to define the city's cultural identity.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel Nikko Kanazawa [Comfort or Stylish Twin]
9	Mon 23/11/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Hiroshima	<p>After several enriching days exploring Japan's cultural heartland, you'll travel in comfort aboard a combination of express train and Shinkansen bullet train - a smooth and scenic journey that takes you into Japan's western regions. This is the longest train ride of your trip, but it offers a wonderful opportunity to relax and take in the changing landscapes as you head toward the historic cities of Hiroshima and Miyajima.</p> <p>In Hiroshima, you'll visit the moving and beautifully designed Peace Memorial Park, a tranquil space dedicated to remembrance and reflection. Here, the powerful exhibits at the Atomic Bomb Museum provide a sobering look at the events of August 1945, offering a thoughtful and respectful insight into the past. While the history is poignant, you'll also experience how modern Hiroshima has transformed into a lively, welcoming city, with wide boulevards, leafy green parks, and a resilient spirit that leaves a lasting impression.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Hotel Granvia Hiroshima South Gate [Superior Twin]

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10	Tue 24/11/2026	Guided tour of Miyajima	<p>A comfortable minivan ride followed by a short ferry crossing brings you to the enchanting island of Miyajima, renowned for the iconic vermillion-red floating torii gate of Itsukushima Shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After marvelling at this stunning symbol of Japan, you'll embark on a guided tour of the shrine itself, exploring its unique pier-like structure that gracefully rises above the tidal waters. Originally built in 593, the island was considered sacred, inhabited only by the gods - a reverence still felt in the tranquil atmosphere today.</p> <p>You'll then visit Momijidani Park, famous for its breathtaking maple trees ablaze with vibrant autumn colours. Miyajima also features several important Buddhist temples and historic pavilions, as well as a charming shopping street along the waterfront, where quaint restaurants and artisan shops invite you to relax and browse local crafts.</p> <p>After returning to the mainland, the evening is yours to experience the vibrant nightlife of Hiroshima. You might like to try a local izakaya for a casual pub-style meal, or pick up a beautifully presented obento box to enjoy at your leisure.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel Granvia Hiroshima South Gate [Superior Twin]
11	Wed 25/11/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Kyoto	<p>This morning, your journey continues as you board the Shinkansen from Hiroshima to Kyoto - Japan's timeless cultural capital.</p> <p>With its deep-rooted elegance and storied history, Kyoto is a city of quiet grandeur and dignified charm. Once the imperial seat of Japan from 794, it now stands as the guardian of centuries-old traditions, boasting an extraordinary 17 UNESCO World Heritage-listed sites. At this time of year, the city is ablaze with the rich hues of autumn - crimson maples and golden ginkgos transforming every temple garden and forested path into a living masterpiece.</p> <p>Upon arrival, enjoy a quick lunch before immersing yourself in the city's most iconic sights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nijo Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage treasure, is where history whispers through elegantly painted sliding doors and nightingale floors. This splendid former residence of the Tokugawa shoguns is at its most enchanting now, as its meticulously landscaped gardens glow with the fiery palette of fall. - Kinkaku-ji (The Golden Pavilion), one of Japan's most iconic and breathtaking landmarks. Set beside a tranquil reflecting pond and framed by a tapestry of autumn foliage, the shimmering gold leaf-covered pavilion offers a wonderful photo opportunity. 	Breakfast, Dinner	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Sanjo Premier [Superior Twin/King]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
12	Thu 26/11/2026	Guided tour of Arashiyama	<p>Today, your journey unfolds in the tranquil beauty of Arashiyama, nestled at the western foothills of Kyoto.</p> <p>Visit the revered Tenryu-ji Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of Kyoto's great Zen temples. Here, you'll stroll through gardens that are masterpieces of both formal elegance and naturalistic design - a living canvas that has enchanted visitors for centuries.</p> <p>Next, surrender to the charm of old-world Japan with a private rickshaw ride through Arashiyama's famous Bamboo Grove. As you glide beneath soaring emerald stalks that whisper with the breeze, the experience becomes almost otherworldly - peaceful, and unforgettable. From there, journey deeper into the rural Sagano area, where quiet mountain paths lead to hidden temples untouched by the usual crowds.</p> <p>For lunch, indulge in a beautifully prepared Kyoto-style tofu meal, a refined expression of Buddhist culinary traditions. Set in a local restaurant, this dining experience celebrates the delicate flavours and textures of tofu.</p> <p>This evening is yours to enjoy at leisure. You may wish to uncover Kyoto's rich culinary scene with a stroll through the atmospheric lanes of Pontocho or Gion.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Sanjo Premier [Superior Twin/King]

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13	Fri 27/11/2026	Guided tour of Kyoto	<p>This morning, travel by private minivan to southern Kyoto, where one of Japan's most iconic spiritual sites awaits - the breathtaking Fushimi Inari Taisha.</p> <p>Dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice and prosperity, this vast shrine complex is renowned for its thousands of vermilion torii gates, gracefully arching over forested paths that weave up the slopes of Mt. Inari.</p> <p>Your cultural immersion continues with a visit to another magnificent temple garden, before heading to the vibrant soul of Kyoto at Nishiki Market - affectionately known as "Kyoto's Kitchen." This lively, 400-meter-long arcade has been serving locals for centuries. Here, you'll encounter a feast for the senses: beautifully displayed seasonal produce, aromatic pickles, artisanal tofu, seafood delicacies, elegant ceramics, handcrafted paper goods, and more. It's the perfect place to sample Kyoto's culinary heritage and perhaps find a unique souvenir or two.</p> <p>This afternoon, enjoy the freedom to explore Kyoto at your own pace. You may wish to discover the city's famed textile markets or simply lose yourself among elegant craft boutiques, specialty shops, and refined department stores offering everything from hand-dyed fabrics to exquisitely wrapped sweets. Whether you're seeking a timeless keepsake or a moment of quiet reflection, Kyoto's understated charm and warm hospitality are always close at hand.</p> <p>This evening, regroup with your fellow travellers for a memorable farewell dinner. Share stories, laughter, and favourite moments from the journey as you reflect on the beauty of Japan and the special experiences you've enjoyed together.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyoto Sanjo Premier [Superior Twin/King]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
14	Sat 28/11/2026	Departure	<p>This morning, after a leisurely breakfast, your unforgettable 2026 Autumn Leaves Tour of Japan comes to a close.</p> <p>From the serene temples of Kyoto to the golden brilliance of autumn foliage, we hope the journey has left you with lasting memories of Japan's timeless beauty and gracious hospitality.</p> <p>From Kyoto, you can choose to return to Tokyo via the shinkansen or transfer to Osaka's Kansai International Airport for your onward journey. Your airport transfer is fully arranged and included in your tour package for a seamless departure.</p> <p>If you're not quite ready to say goodbye, why not extend your stay a little longer? We would be delighted to curate a personalised post-tour extension to showcase another side of Japan - be it a coastal retreat, a cultural deep dive, or a quiet escape into the countryside.</p>	Breakfast	
Inclusions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 13 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) ■ All breakfasts ■ 9 lunches and 8 dinners ■ Airport meet & greet on arrival ■ Hotel transfer by private transport on arrival ■ Airport transfer on the final day ■ All local transport (train and private minivans) ■ Expert English-speaking tour guides (Locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees are included in the itinerary ■ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person) 		
Exclusions			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International and domestic airfare (unless otherwise stated) ■ Travel insurance ■ Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (except the 1st drink at each meal) ■ Tips and gratuities ■ Transport during free time ■ Personal expenses (laundry, coin-locker, internet, telephone etc.) ■ Visa (if required) 		