BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2027 AUTUMN COLOURS SPECTACULAR TOUR OF JAPAN (SIGNATURE)

START: **(Refer to website for date) from Tokyo**
DURATION: **15 days**
PRICE: **AUD $12,160 per person**
SINGLE SUPP: **AUD $2,520 per person**

FINISH: at Kyoto

GROUP size: **8 people**
REF: GAC-27

TOUR OVERVIEW

The Autumn Colours Spectacular Tour of Japan is the ultimate tour of Japan in autumn for those seeking an unforgettable cultural experience during the country's most stunning season. Designed especially for mature travellers, this 15-day journey showcases Japan at the peak of autumn, blending iconic highlights with lesser-known gems that reveal the true spirit of the land.

Travelling in a small group of no more than 8, you'll enjoy exclusive access to boutique accommodation, family-run restaurants, hidden temples, and artisan workshops that are inaccessible to larger tour groups. Walk through golden ginkgo-lined avenues and maple-covered mountain paths, guided by expert local guides who bring Japan's rich history and culture to life.

From the timeless beauty of Kyoto and the serene shrines of Nikko, to rural gems like Takayama and Matsumoto, this autumn tour of Japan is carefully paced to balance discovery with comfort. Highlights include Mt Fuji, Miyajima and Kyoto, along with immersive walking tours through back streets and countryside hamlets.

Whether it's your first trip or a return visit, this comprehensive itinerary promises a deeper, more intimate connection with Japan at its most colourful.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Airport meet and greet on arrival	Upon arrival at Narita or Haneda Airport, a Journey to the East guide will warmly welcome you and assist you onto an airport shuttle to your hotel in Tokyo. Today is a flexible arrival day with no scheduled group activities, allowing you to rest or explore at your own pace. Your hotel is in Shiodome, a sleek and modern district in central Tokyo, perfectly positioned just a short walk from Tsukiji and Ginza. With excellent transport links and a lively yet refined atmosphere, it's an ideal base to begin your Japan adventure. Relax this afternoon and get ready to embark on your 2027 Autumn Colours Spectacular Tour of Japan tomorrow. Many of our guests choose to arrive a day or two early to adjust to the time zone and enjoy	No meals	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]

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		a more relaxed start. We're happy to arrange extra nights in the same hotel room (subject to availability).		
2	Guided tour of Tokyo	Begin your first full day in Tokyo with a peaceful stroll through the beautifully landscaped Hamarikyu Gardens, a former feudal garden where tranquil ponds, pine trees, and seasonal blooms sit against the dramatic backdrop of Tokyo's modern skyline. From here, travel by local train into the heart of the city, experiencing Japan's world-famous rail system like a local. Arriving in Marunouchi, discover Tokyo's elegant business and cultural district as you walk through the spacious grounds surrounding the Imperial Palace and admire the iconic Nijubashi Bridge. Continue along the tree-lined Marunouchi Naka-dori, renowned for its sophisticated boutiques, public art, and European-style atmosphere. Lunch today is a classic Tokyo experience, featuring beautifully prepared tempura at a long-established local favourite in Marunouchi. Afterwards, enjoy panoramic views from the rooftop garden of KITTE Marunouchi overlooking the striking red-brick façade of Tokyo Station, before venturing into the famed depachika food halls of Ginza, where exquisitely presented sweets, delicacies, and seasonal treats offer a fascinating insight into Japanese food culture. Those who wish to return to the hotel can do so with the guide, or you may like to continue exploring the elegant district of Ginza, at your own pace, before returning to the hotel for a well-earned rest. This evening, gather with your fellow travellers for a special "Welcome to Japan" dinner - a chance to toast the journey ahead and share first impressions of this captivating country.	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]
3	Guided tour of Nikko	Today, you venture beyond Tokyo on a full-day excursion to the UNESCO World Heritage town of Nikko, nestled in the mountains north of the city and renowned for its stunning autumn foliage. An early start takes you by express train to this historically rich area. Your day begins with a visit to the lavishly decorated Nikko Toshogu Shrine, the final resting place of Tokugawa Ieyasu, followed by Rinnoji Temple - an important Buddhist site with centuries of spiritual history. After a traditional soba noodle lunch at a local restaurant, continue to the elegant Tamozawa Imperial Villa, a blend of Edo and Meiji-era architecture set against a backdrop of fiery maple trees. You'll also stroll along the peaceful Kanmangafuchi Abyss, where a row of Jizo statues lines the forested riverside - an unforgettable setting during peak autumn colours. In the early evening, return to Tokyo by train.	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]

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4	Transfer to and guided tour of Kawaguchiko (Mt Fuji)	Today, you leave the bustle of Tokyo behind and journey by express train to the serene lakeside town of Kawaguchiko, nestled at the foot of majestic Mt Fuji. Your first stop is the Mt Fuji World Heritage Centre, where engaging exhibits reveal the mountain's powerful cultural and geological significance. For lunch, warm up with hōtō, a hearty regional noodle soup packed with vegetables - a comforting specialty of the area. In the afternoon, discover the breathtaking artistry of the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum, where exquisitely dyed kimonos showcase the lost art of tsujigahana silkwork in a stunning setting. As you explore the lakefront, vibrant autumn leaves frame views of Mt Fuji rising in the distance - an unforgettable seasonal panorama. Tonight, check in to a traditional Japanese ryokan, where you'll be treated to a beautifully prepared kaiseki dinner and a soothing onsen bath, with Mt Fuji silhouetted in the evening light.	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Fuji Ginkei [Japanese style room with futon beddings]
5	Kawaguchiko and transfer to Matsumoto	Start your day with a traditional Japanese breakfast featuring grilled fish, rice, and miso soup before saying farewell to Kawaguchiko. Before departing, head up to the Kachi Kachi Yama Ropeway for one last breathtaking view of Mt Fuji, framed by autumn colours and Lake Kawaguchiko below - a picture-perfect farewell to Japan's most iconic peak. Travel by local express train to Matsumoto, a charming castle town nestled in the Japanese Alps. Upon arrival, take a stroll through the beautifully preserved merchant districts of Nakamachi and Nawate-dori, where traditional namako-walled buildings house shops offering local crafts, handmade pottery, woodenware, and regional delicacies - including sake. In the evening, dine at a cosy local Italian restaurant that puts a delightful Nagano twist on its dishes, celebrating the region's fresh, seasonal produce.	Breakfast, Dinner	Matsumoto Marunouchi Hotel [Deluxe Double/Twin]
6	Guided tour of Matsumoto and Kanazawa	This morning begins with a visit to one of Japan's most iconic original castles - Matsumoto Castle. Arriving early allows you to explore the striking black-and-white fortress before the crowds, with time to admire its elegant wooden interiors, steep staircases, and surrounding moat against the crisp mountain air. Later, board a scenic train bound for Kanazawa, a city famed for its preserved samurai and geisha districts, rich crafts, and refined cuisine. Upon arrival, step into the tranquillity of Kenrokuen, one of Japan's most celebrated landscape gardens, beautifully framed by seasonal foliage. Stroll through nearby Kanazawa Castle Park, where stone walls and wooden gates echo the city's feudal past. After settling into your hotel, enjoy a truly memorable dinner: premium wagyu beef teppanyaki prepared before your eyes at an exclusive local restaurant - a delicious and dramatic culinary highlight of your journey.	Breakfast, Dinner	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kanazawa [Superior King/Deluxe Twin]

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7	Morning guided tour of Kanazawa and free afternoon and evening	Today, discover one of Kanazawa's proudest traditions with a visit to a renowned Kutani porcelain kiln. Here, you'll see the intricate process behind these vividly coloured ceramics and gain insight into a centuries-old art form. By midday, make your way to the bustling Omicho Market - Kanazawa's lively food hub - where you can wander among seafood stalls and seasonal produce, and choose your lunch from countless fresh local specialties. The afternoon and evening are yours to explore: why not visit the atmospheric Nagamachi district, where earthen-walled lanes, samurai residences, and stone-paved streets tell the story of the city's feudal past.	Breakfast	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kanazawa [Superior King/Deluxe Twin]
8	Guided tour of Gokayama and Takayama	Today, you journey deep into the mountains, leaving behind Kanazawa's cultural elegance for the rustic charm of farming villages. En route, you'll stop at the UNESCO World Heritage-listed village of Gokayama, a serene and lesser-known gem compared to its more crowded neighbour, Shirakawago. Nestled in a quiet valley, Gokayama's steeply thatched gassho-zukuri farmhouses seem untouched by time. Enjoy a peaceful morning wandering through this tranquil hamlet, where traditional mountain life still pulses gently beneath the surface. Continuing to Takayama, a beautifully preserved Edo-period town, you'll explore its atmospheric old streets on a guided walk. Discover artisan shops, a charming folk museum, and merchants offering local specialties like handcrafted lacquerware, rich miso, and small-batch sake. As evening falls, you'll enjoy dinner at a cozy local izakaya - an informal tavern-style restaurant - where you can unwind and taste a variety of regional dishes in a relaxed, welcoming setting.	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Tokyu Stay Hida-Takayama Musubi-no-Yu [Western style room]
9	Morning guided tour of Takayama and free afternoon and evening	Your morning in Takayama begins with a visit to its 200-year-old morning market, where locals still come to sell fresh produce, pickles, and handmade crafts along the riverfront - a cheerful, living tradition that offers a glimpse into daily life in the mountains. Next, step into the Yatai Kaikan, the Festival Float Museum, where you'll marvel at the ornate, centuries-old floats used in Takayama's famous seasonal festivals - true works of art that showcase the town's great cultural pride and craftsmanship. Enjoy a relaxed afternoon and evening at leisure. You may wish to wander through the atmospheric streets of the historic Shiroyama Park area, where quiet temple paths and forested walking trails offer lovely seasonal scenery and panoramic views over the town below. For those seeking a more active experience, optional cycling through the surrounding countryside provides a wonderful opportunity to discover rice fields, traditional farmhouses, and rural landscapes at a gentle pace. Alternatively, consider a short local train journey to the charming canal town of Hida-Furukawa, renowned for its white-walled storehouses, carp-filled waterways, and timeless small-town atmosphere.	Breakfast	Tokyu Stay Hida-Takayama Musubi-no-Yu [Western style room]

DAY	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
10	Guided tour of Takayama and transfer to Hiroshima	This morning, you'll board a series of trains and begin your journey to Hiroshima, with a relaxing lunch enjoyed onboard - just like the locals do. Watching the countryside glide past your window, you'll feel the rhythm of modern Japan in motion. Upon arrival, check into your hotel and take a moment to unwind before heading out to visit Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park and Atomic Bomb Museum, timed in the late afternoon to allow for a quieter, more contemplative experience. Walk through powerful exhibits and serene memorials that honour the resilience of Hiroshima and its ongoing message of peace. It's a profound and essential part of any journey through Japan This evening experience Hiroshima's iconic soul food - Okonomiyaki. This savoury pancake, layered with noodles, cabbage and pork or seafood, is cooked right before your eyes and captures the bold, hearty flavours of the region - an unforgettable meal to end a day of rich discovery.	Breakfast, Dinner	Hotel INTERGATE HIROSHIMA [Superior Twin]
11	Guided tour of Miyajima	After breakfast, depart Hiroshima and travel by local train and ferry towards the sacred island of Miyajima, long celebrated as one of Japan's most beautiful and spiritual destinations. The approach across the Seto Inland Sea offers a wonderful first glimpse of the island's forested mountains and iconic floating torii gate rising from the water. Upon arrival, leave your luggage at the hotel before setting out to explore the island's timeless atmosphere. Visit the peaceful hillside temple of Daisho-in Temple, one of Miyajima's most treasured spiritual sites, lined with stone statues, prayer wheels, and tranquil forest pathways. Later, wander through the seasonal beauty of Momijidani Park, particularly stunning during the autumn foliage season when brilliant maple leaves transform the valley into a tapestry of red and gold. If conditions allow and crowds are light, there is also the opportunity to take the ropeway into the mountains for sweeping views across the islands and coastline of the Seto Inland Sea. As evening approaches and many day visitors depart, Miyajima reveals its quieter and more atmospheric side - a memorable opportunity to experience one of Japan's most iconic locations in relative peace.	Breakfast, Dinner	Miyajima Grand Hotel Arimoto [Japanese style room with Western beds]

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12	Guided tour of Miyajima and transfer to Kyoto	Begin the morning with a peaceful visit to Itsukushima Shrine before the island becomes busy with day visitors, allowing time to fully appreciate the serenity and beauty of this iconic waterfront sanctuary. After returning to the hotel to collect your luggage, depart the island by ferry and continue by local train towards Hiroshima. Before boarding the Shinkansen, enjoy free time to browse the station's excellent food stalls and select a beautifully prepared ekiben lunch box - a classic Japanese rail travel tradition best enjoyed while watching the scenery glide past from the comfort of the bullet train. Arriving in Kyoto, transfer by private vehicle to the magnificent Nijo Castle, the former residence of the Tokugawa shoguns and one of Kyoto's most historically significant sites. Explore its elegant interiors, famous "nightingale floors," and beautifully landscaped gardens that reflect the refined aesthetics of the Edo period. Continue to the iconic Kinkaku-ji, the celebrated Golden Pavilion, where shimmering gold leaf reflects across a tranquil pond surrounded by carefully manicured gardens. Particularly beautiful in the softer afternoon light, this world-famous temple perfectly captures Kyoto's timeless elegance. After checking into the hotel and enjoying some time to rest, gather once more in the evening for a relaxed dinner at a local restaurant.	Breakfast, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]
13	Morning guided tour of Kyoto and free afternoon and evening	Today you'll begin with a morning visit to one of Japan's most iconic and photographed sites: Fushimi Inari Taisha. Famous for its thousands of vibrant vermilion torii gates, this sacred Shinto shrine winds its way through a forested hillside, offering a peaceful and spiritual start to the day before the crowds arrive. Next, the remarkable Sanjusangen-do, renowned for its extraordinary hall lined with 1,001 gilded statues of Kannon, the Buddhist goddess of mercy. The quiet reverence and artistic mastery of this temple make it one of Kyoto's most memorable cultural experiences. Later, return towards the historic districts of eastern Kyoto and enjoy a leisurely stroll through Gion, the city's famed geisha quarter, where traditional wooden machiya houses, hidden alleyways, teahouses, and lantern-lit streets preserve the atmosphere of old Japan. Walking together through to the lively Shijo Kawaramachi area, guests are then free this afternoon to continue exploring at their own pace - whether browsing boutiques and department stores, relaxing in a café, or discovering one of Kyoto's many excellent restaurants for dinner.	Breakfast	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]

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14	Guided tour of Arashiyama	On your final day in Kyoto - and the last day of this unforgettable journey, venture west to Arashiyama, a picturesque district on the edge of Kyoto known for its ethereal bamboo forest, where towering stalks sway gently in the breeze, creating a dreamlike canopy of green. But instead of staying with the crowds, we'll guide you deeper into the Sagano area - Kyoto's serene countryside - where narrow paths lead to hidden temples, quiet gardens, and timeless rural scenery that offer a rare glimpse into the city's more contemplative side. For lunch, enjoy a beautifully prepared Kyoto-style tofu meal, a local specialty that reflects the region's refined culinary traditions - simple, elegant, and deeply satisfying. In the evening, gather once more with your fellow travellers for a farewell dinner, sharing stories, laughs, and highlights from the journey as you toast to the memories made and the beauty of Japan experienced together.	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]
15	Departure	After breakfast, it's time to check out of your hotel and reflect on the incredible journey you've just completed - the conclusion of your 2027 Autumn Colour Spectacular Tour of Japan. From the vibrant reds and golds of ancient temple gardens to the timeless charm of mountain villages and the warm hospitality you encountered along the way, we hope these memories will stay with you for years to come. From Kyoto, you can choose to return to Tokyo via the shinkansen or catch a flight from 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. If your heart longs to discover even more of Japan, we would be delighted to help craft a personalised post-tour extension, introducing you to another fascinating region, whether it's a remote island, an artsy coastal town, or another cultural heartland.	Breakfast	
	Inclusions for Group Tour	▪ 14 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) ▪ All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 9 dinners ▪ Airport meet & greet ▪ Hotel transfer by public transport on arrival ▪ Airport transfer by public transport on the final day ▪ All local transport (train, bus and private minivans) ▪ Transport IC card preloaded with starter credit ▪ Expert English-speaking tour guides (locally licensed) ▪ Cultural activities and entry fees are included in the itinerary ▪ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person)		

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	Exclusions for Group Tour	▪ 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)		