

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2027 CHERRY BLOSSOM SPECTACULAR TOUR OF JAPAN (SIGNATURE)

Start: Tuesday, 23 March 2027 from Tokyo
Finish: Wednesday, 7 April 2027 at Kyoto
Duration: 16 days
Group size: 8 people
Cost estimate: AUD \$12,120 per person
Single supplement: AUD \$2,750 per person
Ref: GSS-27

TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2027 Cherry Blossom Spectacular Tour of Japan invites you to experience the country at its most enchanting - when soft pink blossoms transform cities, countryside, and landscapes into scenes of timeless beauty. Designed for mature travellers who value deep cultural immersion, support, and meaningful encounters, this 16-day fully escorted journey offers far more than an ordinary sightseeing trip.

Travel from Tokyo's vibrant parks to the tranquil temples and gardens of Kyoto, the poignant heritage sites of Hiroshima and Nara, the serene lakeside scenery of Kawaguchiko near Mt Fuji, and the lesser-visited cultural gems of Toyama and Lake Biwa. Along the way, you'll witness cherry blossoms in all their splendour - from iconic postcard views to peaceful hidden spots cherished by locals.

Staying in handpicked boutique accommodations, you will enjoy expert guidance, personalised service, and thoughtfully curated experiences available only through Japan specialists, Journey to the East.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Tue 23/3/2027	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Your unforgettable adventure through Japan starts the moment you touch down in Tokyo. After arriving at one of the city's international airports, a warm and knowledgeable Journey to the East guide will be waiting to welcome you and escort you to your centrally located hotel via a comfortable airport shuttle or Japan's famously efficient train system.</p> <p>With no scheduled group activities today, you're free to settle in, unwind, and gently ease into the rhythm of Japan in spring. If you feel ready to explore, take a stroll through the neighbourhood - perhaps wander the peaceful grounds of Higashi Gyoen (the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace), browse the flavours of Tsukiji Outer Market, or enjoy the elegant streets of Ginza, where early cherry blossoms may already hint at the beauty to come.</p>	No meals	KKR Hotel Tokyo [Deluxe Twin]

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			<p>Many travellers choose to arrive a day or two before the tour to recover from the long flight, adjust to the time difference, or enjoy more time discovering Tokyo at their own pace. If you'd like us to arrange additional nights at your tour hotel, we're delighted to assist.</p>		
2	Wed 24/3/2027	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>Your first full day in Tokyo begins with a gentle orientation by your expert Journey to the East guide, offering insights into the city's history, culture, and the rhythms of daily life in Japan's vibrant capital.</p> <p>Your morning takes you to Asakusa, one of Tokyo's oldest and best-preserved districts. Here you'll explore Sensoji, Tokyo's beloved temple, and wander the traditional shop-lined streets that surround it - an atmospheric glimpse into the city's Edo-period past. From here, enjoy a stroll through Sumida Park, a riverside promenade famed for its beautiful cherry blossoms framing views of the Tokyo Skytree.</p> <p>After lunch, you'll experience the seamless efficiency of Tokyo's subway system as you travel like a local into the city centre. Your afternoon is spent in Nihonbashi, a historic commercial district that once served as the heart of old Edo. With your guide, explore its elegant bridges, traditional craft shops, and modern department stores, discovering how centuries-old traditions continue to thrive amid contemporary Tokyo. Your day will close after a welcome dinner.</p> <p>This culturally rich day blends heritage, cherry blossoms, and everyday Tokyo life - an ideal introduction to the depth and character of Japan's capital.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	KKR Hotel Tokyo [Deluxe Twin]

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3	Thu 25/3/2027	Transfer to and guided tour of Kawaguchiko (Mt Fuji)	<p>Today, you journey by express train to the picturesque Kawaguchiko, nestled in the stunning lakes district at the base of Mt Fuji, Japan's tallest and most revered mountain. Prepare to be captivated by breathtaking views of this iconic peak, a symbol of Japan's natural beauty and spiritual heart.</p> <p>Begin your day with a comforting lunch of Hoto noodles, a local specialty of thick, chewy noodles served in a rich miso broth - a perfect taste of regional warmth and tradition.</p> <p>Next, explore the Mt Fuji World Heritage Centre, where fascinating exhibits reveal the mountain's geological wonders and deep cultural significance through engaging displays. Then, immerse yourself in exquisite artistry at the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum, home to stunning kimono masterpieces created using the ancient shibori dyeing technique - a true feast for the eyes.</p> <p>As evening falls, retreat to your charming ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn where you can unwind and soak in the serene atmosphere. Here, indulge in the soothing onsen hot springs, with open-air baths overlooking the tranquil lake and the majestic silhouette of Mt Fuji - an unforgettable way to connect with Japan's timeless harmony of nature and relaxation.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Fuji Ginkei [Japanese Western style room]
4	Fri 26/3/2027	Guided tour of Kawaguchiko and transfer to Tokyo	<p>This morning, you'll ride the Kachi Kachi Ropeway, ascending high above the sparkling waters of Lake Kawaguchiko. From the summit, take in sweeping, picture-perfect views of Mt Fuji, its iconic silhouette rising above lakes, forests, and villages.</p> <p>You'll then visit Saiko Iyashi-no-Sato Nenba, an open-air museum village beautifully reconstructed after a historic landslide. Here, thatched-roof farmhouses, artisan workshops, and gentle rural scenery offer a peaceful look into traditional life at the foot of Mt Fuji.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you board a train back to Tokyo, gliding once again through scenic countryside as you return to the heart of Japan's bustling capital. This evening is yours to relax, explore, or enjoy one of Tokyo's many incredible dining options.</p>	Breakfast	KKR Hotel Tokyo [Deluxe Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
5	Sat 27/3/2027	Transfer to and guided tour of Toyama	<p>Leaving Tokyo behind, board Japan's legendary Shinkansen bullet train and glide effortlessly toward Toyama, a scenic coastal city on Japan's less-travelled west coast. Over the next two nights, you'll stay in Toyama City, a peaceful regional hub known for its abundant green spaces, relaxed pace, and rich cultural heritage - yet still largely undiscovered by international visitors.</p> <p>Upon arrival, you'll step aboard a charming river cruise, drifting gently beneath arching cherry blossom trees. It's a tranquil, photogenic experience that showcases Toyama's natural beauty at its best.</p> <p>Afterwards, enjoy a sushi lunch made with Toyama's famed seafood, celebrated for its freshness and quality thanks to the nutrient-rich waters of Toyama Bay.</p> <p>Your afternoon continues with a guided exploration of Toyama, including sites that reveal the city's long-standing connection to Japan's traditional pharmaceutical industry, a craft that has shaped Toyama's identity for centuries.</p> <p>Your centrally located hotel offers an ideal base for a relaxing evening stroll. Tonight, unwind over dinner at a welcoming local restaurant, where you can savour regional flavours and the warm hospitality of Toyama.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel JAL City Toyama [Superior Twin]
6	Sun 28/3/2027	Guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>Today, embark on a day trip to the neighbouring city of Kanazawa, a former wealthy castle town rich in samurai culture and architectural heritage. Begin with a visit to Kenrokuen Garden, dating back to the 17th century and celebrated as one of Japan's three great gardens. Stroll among its serene ponds, teahouses, and ancient cherry trees, capturing the perfect springtime setting.</p> <p>After lunch, continue your guided exploration of Kanazawa's historic districts, including the Higashi Chaya geisha quarter, where traditional teahouses and artisan shops preserve centuries-old crafts and cultural traditions.</p> <p>Return to Toyama in the late afternoon, leaving the evening free to enjoy the city's vibrant culinary scene, sampling regional specialties or relaxing at your centrally located hotel.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel JAL City Toyama [Superior Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
7	Mon 29/3/2027	Guided tour of Lake Biwa surroundings	<p>Today, you'll travel to Lake Biwa, Japan's largest lake, surrounded by charming towns and villages that reflect the region's rich history and natural beauty. The highlight of the day is a visit to Hikone Castle, one of Japan's four surviving National Treasure castles. Wander its historic grounds and enjoy the magnificent cherry blossoms that frame the castle, creating a quintessential springtime scene.</p> <p>This evening, check into a lakeside resort hotel, where you can relax and enjoy a peaceful evening by the water, taking in the serene beauty of Lake Biwa and the surrounding landscapes.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Biwafront Hikone [Moderate Twin]
8	Tue 30/3/2027	Guided tour of Lake Biwa and transfer to Nara	<p>Today, enjoy the tranquil beauty of Lake Biwa, away from the usual tourist crowds. Your first stop is the charming canal town of Omihachiman, where a guided stroll reveals historic buildings, traditional streetscapes, and a sense of timeless Japan.</p> <p>After lunch, depart Lake Biwa and travel to Nara, one of Japan's ancient capitals. In the afternoon, explore Nara Park, famous for its freely roaming deer, then visit Todaiji Temple, home to the world's largest bronze Buddha statue, and Nigatsudo Hall, offering a stunning vantage point for the sunset over the city.</p> <p>You will stay in Nara for the next two nights, providing a perfect base for further cultural immersion in this historically rich region.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Onyado Nono Nara [Deluxe Twin]
9	Wed 31/3/2027	Guided tour of Nara - Asuka village and surrounds	<p>Today, you venture into the peaceful countryside of Nara Prefecture, far from the crowds and tourist trails. Though once part of Japan's ancient capital, this rural region now offers a tranquil landscape dotted with quiet farming villages, sacred shrines, and fascinating remnants of the past.</p> <p>Your day includes visits to lesser-known archaeological sites that offer a glimpse into Japan's early civilisations, a stroll through a beautifully preserved merchant town where time seems to stand still, and a stop at a local sake brewery, where you'll learn about the centuries-old brewing traditions and perhaps enjoy a tasting of their finest seasonal sake.</p> <p>Back to your hotel in central Nara, you will have a free evening tonight.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Onyado Nono Nara [Deluxe Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
10	Thu 1/4/2027	Guided tour of Osaka and transfer to Hiroshima	<p>Today, leave Nara and journey west toward Hiroshima, travelling through the dynamic city of Osaka. In Osaka, enjoy a short guided tour of the vibrant Dotonbori district, famous for its neon-lit streets, lively atmosphere, and street food culture. Savour a typical Osaka lunch, sampling the city's culinary specialties.</p> <p>Continue your journey on the Shinkansen, reaching Hiroshima, the western gateway of Honshu Island. Hiroshima is a city of profound historical significance, known worldwide for the tragic events of 1945 and its inspiring message of peace. Explore the city's heart and enjoy an okonomiyaki dinner, a Hiroshima specialty layered with fresh ingredients and cooked to perfection.</p> <p>Tonight, you'll stay in a centrally located hotel in Hiroshima, providing easy access to the city's key sites and a comfortable base for rest after a day of travel and exploration.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	INTERGATE Hiroshima [Superior Double/Twin]
11	Fri 2/4/2027	Guided tour of Hiroshima and Iwakuni	<p>Start your day early to beat the crowds with a visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and a guided tour of Peace Memorial Park. This poignant experience offers a moving insight into the city's history and enduring message of peace.</p> <p>Afterwards, travel by private minibus to the nearby town of Iwakuni, known for its picturesque charm. Explore the Kintaikyo Bridge, an iconic arched wooden bridge spanning the Nishiki River, and visit Iwakuni Castle, perched atop a hill with sweeping views of the surrounding countryside.</p> <p>Return to Hiroshima in the late afternoon, leaving the evening free to explore at your leisure. A recommended option is Shukkeien Garden, beautifully illuminated with cherry blossoms, offering a serene and magical evening experience in the heart of the city.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	INTERGATE Hiroshima [Superior Double/Twin]

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12	Sat 3/4/2027	Guided tour of Miyajima	<p>Today, take a short ferry ride across the sparkling waters of Hiroshima Bay to Miyajima Island, one of Japan's most iconic and scenic destinations. Begin the day with a ride on the Misen Ropeway to the summit of Mount Misen, where panoramic views of the Seto Inland Sea unfold - a truly magical and unforgettable sight.</p> <p>Descend to explore Miyajima's notable sites, including temples, shrines, and forested paths that showcase the island's rich spiritual and cultural heritage. Stop for a leisurely lunch before experiencing the island's most famous landmark: the floating torii gate of Itsukushima Shrine. With the day-trippers gone, enjoy the serene atmosphere and capture the torii rising gracefully from the sea, especially as the tide changes.</p> <p>Tonight, stay on the island, allowing you to fully appreciate the tranquil beauty of Miyajima after the crowds have departed - a rare and memorable experience for discerning travellers.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Miyajima Villa [Seaside Style Twin]
13	Sun 4/4/2027	Transfer to and guided tour of Kyoto	<p>Today, leave Miyajima and take the Shinkansen one last time on your journey to Kyoto, Japan's cultural jewel and former imperial capital. For an authentic Japanese experience, why not enjoy a classic obento lunch box onboard, savouring seasonal ingredients while watching the countryside glide past?</p> <p>Kyoto, with a history dating back to 794, is a living tapestry of centuries-old temples, artisan workshops, galleries, and world-class cuisine, featuring 17 UNESCO World Heritage sites that reveal its enduring cultural richness. You will stay in Kyoto for three nights, allowing time to immerse yourself in the city's traditions.</p> <p>After settling into your hotel, take a leisurely riverside walk lined with elegant townhouses and cherry trees in bloom, offering a serene introduction to Kyoto's graceful atmosphere. In the afternoon, visit handpicked gardens and parks celebrated for their spectacular cherry blossoms, where petals drift gently in the breeze and reflect in tranquil ponds - a truly magical start to your Kyoto experience.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
14	Mon 5/4/2027	Guided tour of Arashiyama	<p>Today, venture west to the scenic mountain foothills of Arashiyama and Sagano, where timeless landscapes, historic temples, and tranquil rivers define the quintessential Kyoto experience. No visit to Arashiyama is complete without exploring the famous bamboo grove, where towering stalks filter sunlight into a soft, ethereal green glow. Enhance the experience with a ride by rickshaw, gliding through this otherworldly landscape before strolling the quiet backstreets of Sagano. Arrive at the serene Daikaku-ji Temple, a hidden gem with a reflective lake framed by cherry blossoms, offering a rare moment of peaceful contemplation.</p> <p>For lunch, enjoy a traditional Kyoto tofu meal, a delicate specialty rooted in Zen temple cuisine. Return to your hotel via the Golden Pavilion, another Kyoto icon, before attending the Miyako Odori, a springtime dance performance by Kyoto's celebrated geisha and maiko. Dressed in exquisite kimonos, they bring to life centuries-old artistry, grace, and elegance - a captivating cultural experience rarely accessible to visitors.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]
15	Tue 6/4/2027	Guided tour of Kyoto	<p>Begin your day with a visit to Fushimi Inari Taisha, Kyoto's iconic shrine famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates that wind through the forested hillside - a truly unforgettable sight. Your guide will then lead you to a quieter, yet equally significant, cultural site of Sanjusangendo Temple, home to 1,001 intricately carved statues of Kannon, the goddess of mercy.</p> <p>The afternoon is free for personal exploration, allowing you to pursue your own Kyoto interests—whether it's browsing antique markets, attending a cultural workshop, or enjoying leisurely shopping in the city's charming districts.</p> <p>In the evening, gather with your fellow travellers for a farewell dinner, celebrating your journey through Japan. Share stories, reminisce over the memorable experiences of the tour, and toast to the beauty, culture, and cherry blossoms that have made this journey truly unforgettable.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]

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16	Wed 7/4/2027	Departure	<p>After a leisurely breakfast, check out and say goodbye to your fellow travellers as your 2027 Cherry Blossom Spectacular Tour of Japan comes to a close.</p> <p>From here, travel conveniently by airport express train or limousine bus to Osaka's Itami or Kansai International Airports, or return by Shinkansen to Tokyo to depart from one of its international airports. Our team is happy to assist with all transfer arrangements, ensuring a smooth and stress-free journey.</p> <p>For those whose hearts long to explore more of Japan's rich culture, stunning landscapes, and hidden gems, we can craft a personalised post-tour extension, designed to immerse you further in Japan's unique experiences and traditions.</p>	Breakfast	
Inclusions for Group Tour			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 15 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) ■ All breakfasts, 11 lunches and 9 dinners ■ Airport meet & greet on arrival ■ Hotel transfer by public transport on arrival ■ All local transport (train, bus and private minivans) ■ Airport transfer by public transport on departure ■ Pre-loaded transport IC card ■ Expert English-speaking tour guides (locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees are included in the itinerary ■ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person) 		
Exclusions for Group Tour			<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) 		