

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2027 CHERRY BLOSSOM TOUR OF JAPAN - CLASSIC ROUTE (COMFORT)

Start: Saturday, 27 March 2027 from Tokyo

Finish: Wednesday, 7 April 2027 at Kyoto

Duration: 12 days

Group size: 8 people

Cost estimate: AUD \$13,310 per person

Single supplement: AUD \$3,200 per person

Ref: GSL-27

TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2027 Cherry Blossom Tour of Japan - Classic Route is thoughtfully crafted for travellers who want comfort, attentive support, and unhurried exploration of Japan's most beloved sights at peak sakura season. Travelling in an extra small group of no more than 8 guests, you enjoy luxury accommodation, private transport or Green Class shinkansen, and a seamless, fully escorted journey.

Beginning in Tokyo and continuing through Hakone, Nagoya, Hiroshima, Miyajima, and Kyoto, this tour blends world-famous icons - Mt Fuji, Tokyo's highlights, Kyoto's temples - with gentle pacing and ample time to truly appreciate each destination. Along the way, exclusive experiences and visits to quieter neighbourhoods reveal a more authentic side of Japan, making this a cherry blossom journey that is both enriching and exceptionally comfortable.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Sat 27/3/2027	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Welcome to Japan and the start of your 2027 Cherry Blossom Tour of Japan - Classic Route. On arrival at either of Tokyo's international airports, you'll be warmly greeted by your Journey to the East guide and escorted by private transfer directly to your comfortable Tokyo hotel - an ideal way to begin your trip stress-free.</p> <p>As today is an arrival day, there is no scheduled group activity, giving you plenty of time to rest at your own pace. If you feel like some gentle movement, enjoy a short stroll around the hotel's neighbourhood to get a feel for Tokyo. Your three-night stay in Tokyo allows you to settle in smoothly and adjust to the time zone before the touring begins.</p> <p>Many mature travellers choose to arrive earlier for an even more relaxed start. If you'd like us to arrange extra nights of accommodation, we are more than happy to assist.</p>	No meals	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Superior King Garden View Prime]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
2	Sun 28/3/2027	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>After a gentle orientation with your guide, you begin your discovery of Tokyo - an inspiring blend of ultra-modern energy and rich cultural heritage. Travelling by private vehicle for comfort and ease, you start in the historic district of Asakusa, where traditional streetscapes offer a glimpse into old Edo. Here, you visit Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest and most cherished temple, known for its striking Kaminarimon Gate and lively Nakamise shopping street.</p> <p>After enjoying a delicious traditional tempura lunch, your afternoon takes you to Shinjuku Gyoen, one of Tokyo's largest and most beautiful landscape gardens. A peaceful oasis in the heart of the city, Shinjuku Gyoen becomes one of Tokyo's most enchanting sakura viewing locations - perfect for relaxed, unhurried strolling.</p> <p>On your way back to the hotel, your driver takes you through the iconic Shibuya Crossing, giving you a chance to experience this world-famous intersection from the comfort of your vehicle - an exciting glimpse into Tokyo's fast-paced urban energy.</p> <p>After a fulfilling day of sightseeing, you return to your hotel to rest before joining your fellow travellers for a relaxed welcome dinner, a wonderful way to ease into the journey and connect with your group.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Superior King Garden View Prime]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
3	Mon 29/3/2027	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>Tokyo has many faces, and today you begin your exploration in the elegant Marunouchi district. Once the inner precinct of Edo Castle - today the Emperor's residence - Marunouchi has evolved into Tokyo's most prestigious business district, where history and modern design sit side by side.</p> <p>Your morning walk with your guide takes you along broad, tree-lined avenues and art-filled plazas before arriving at Nijubashi, the iconic double-arched bridge leading toward the Imperial Palace. You also admire the red-brick Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building, beautifully restored to its early 20th-century grandeur.</p> <p>After the walk, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, dining alongside Japanese office workers for an authentic taste of weekday city life.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you travel to Nihonbashi, the historic commercial heart of Tokyo. Once the official starting point of the Edo-period highways, Nihonbashi blends traditional shops, modern department stores, and its graceful namesake bridge, creating a serene and culturally rich setting perfect for slower-paced exploring.</p> <p>After a rewarding day, return to your hotel to relax before heading out to dinner at a local izakaya, a casual Japanese eatery offering a warm and authentic dining experience.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo [Superior King Garden View Prime]
4	Tue 30/3/2027	Transfer to and guided tour of Hakone	<p>Today, you farewell Tokyo and travel west by Shinkansen to Hakone, a picturesque hot springs resort area nestled in the mountains near Mt Fuji. Over the next two days, you will stay at one of Hakone's premium boutique onsen hotels, offering both comfort and traditional Japanese charm. Here, you will experience Japan's onsen culture firsthand and discover why soaking in a hot spring remains a cherished pastime for locals and visitors alike.</p> <p>Your day in Hakone is at a relaxed pace, with private vehicle transfers taking you through the stunning Izu-Hakone National Park. Art lovers will delight in visits to the Okada Museum, renowned for its exquisite collection of Japanese and East Asian art, followed by the Hakone Open-Air Museum, where spectacular outdoor sculptures are set against the region's natural beauty.</p> <p>In the evening, settle in to your hotel for a kaiseki multi-course dinner, beautifully prepared with fresh, seasonal local ingredients - a perfect introduction to traditional Japanese haute cuisine.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Kowakien Tenyu [Twin Room with Open-air Bath]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
5	Wed 31/3/2027	Guided tour of Hakone	<p>Your exploration of Hakone continues today at a gentle, relaxed pace. Begin your morning in Owakudani, the dramatic volcanic valley created around 3,000 years ago during a major eruption of Mount Hakone. Known as the “Great Boiling Valley,” Owakudani is famous for its steaming sulphur vents, bubbling pools, and rugged volcanic landscapes - a striking reminder of the region’s geothermal power.</p> <p>After taking in the otherworldly scenery, continue to Lake Ashi, a scenic crater lake formed after the ancient collapse of Mount Hakone. Enjoy a relaxing cruise across its serene waters, with views of the surrounding mountains and, weather permitting, the iconic Mt Fuji reflected on the lake’s surface.</p> <p>Next, visit the Narukawa Art Museum, home to an exceptional collection of Japanese-style fine art, including nihonga paintings, ceramics, and lacquerware. The museum’s modern galleries and panoramic windows offer superb views over Lake Ashi and Mt Fuji, adding an artistic and contemplative element to your day.</p> <p>Return to your hotel in the late afternoon for a soothing onsen bath, followed by dinner at the hotel, where you’ll enjoy another evening of beautifully prepared, seasonal cuisine.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kowakien Tenyu [Twin Room with Open-air Bath]
6	Thu 1/4/2027	Guided tour of Nagoya and transfer to Hiroshima	<p>Today, you travel west by Shinkansen, Japan’s high-speed rail, to Nagoya, a city renowned for its rich industrial heritage. Your first stop is the Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology, where you can explore the fascinating history of one of Japan’s most iconic manufacturers. Through thoughtfully curated exhibits, see how craftsmanship and innovation have shaped both automobiles and textiles, offering a unique insight into Japan’s technological achievements.</p> <p>Lunch is at Noritake Garden, the historic home of Japan’s world-famous porcelain manufacturer. Enjoy a relaxed meal while dining on fine Noritake china, and then take some time to browse the on-site museum displays and shop for beautifully crafted tableware.</p> <p>After lunch, continue your journey by Shinkansen to Hiroshima, where you check in to your hotel and unwind. In the evening, enjoy a buffet dinner at the hotel, allowing for a comfortable and leisurely end to your day of travel and discovery.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Granvia Hiroshima South Gate [Superior Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
7	Fri 2/4/2027	Guided tour of Miyajima	<p>Today, you take a short ferry ride to the picturesque island of Miyajima, famed for its natural beauty and cultural heritage. Begin with a guided visit to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Itsukushima Shrine, known worldwide for its iconic “floating” torii gate. The shrine was first constructed in 593, when Miyajima was considered a sacred island for the gods. At that time, ordinary mortals were not allowed to step on the island and could only approach by boat to perform rituals, which is why the shrine’s main building is constructed on piers above the water - an extraordinary architectural feature.</p> <p>Enjoy a relaxed lunch on the island before continuing your guided exploration, taking in its peaceful streets, local shops, and charming sights. You will also have some free time to stroll at your own pace.</p> <p>In the late afternoon, return to Hiroshima by ferry and vehicle. The evening is free for your own leisure, offering the chance to dine locally or relax at your hotel after a rewarding day of cultural discovery.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel Granvia Hiroshima South Gate [Superior Twin]
8	Sat 3/4/2027	Guided tour of Hiroshima and Kyoto	<p>Start the day early in Hiroshima to beat the crowds with a visit to the Peace Memorial Park and its moving Peace Memorial Museum. Here, you can reflect on the devastating impact of the world’s first atomic bomb, dropped on August 6, 1945, and gain a deeper understanding of Hiroshima’s journey of resilience and hope.</p> <p>After this poignant visit, travel northeast by Shinkansen to Kyoto, the final destination of your journey. For lunch, why not embrace a Japanese tradition by picking up a beautifully presented obento lunch box at Hiroshima Station and enjoying it aboard the Shinkansen as you glide through the countryside?</p> <p>Upon arrival in Kyoto, begin exploring with a visit to Nijo Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its elegant architecture and beautifully landscaped gardens. Later, your guide will take you to a secret cherry blossom viewing spot, allowing you to enjoy Kyoto’s iconic sakura away from the crowds.</p> <p>You will stay in Kyoto for the next four nights, giving you plenty of time to explore the city and its surroundings at a relaxed pace, visiting both Kyoto’s major landmarks and hidden gems in comfort.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kyoto Brighton Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
9	Sun 4/4/2027	Guided tour of Arashiyama	<p>Today, you explore Arashiyama and Sagano, nestled in Kyoto's scenic western mountains. Begin with a visit to Tenryu-ji Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage site celebrated for its exquisite stroll garden, which cleverly incorporates the surrounding mountains into its design.</p> <p>Continue to the historic Togetsu Bridge and Arashiyama's famous bamboo forest, where towering bamboo stalks create an ethereal, peaceful atmosphere. To escape the crowds, enjoy a gentle rickshaw ride through quiet backstreets, stopping at Daikakuji Temple, known for its beautiful lake edged with cherry trees. Enjoy the scenic views before stopping for a traditional tofu lunch, one of Kyoto's specialties.</p> <p>On your way back to central Kyoto, visit Kinkaku-ji, the iconic Golden Pavilion, a highlight of any Kyoto itinerary.</p> <p>In the evening, attend the Miyako Odori, a traditional dance performance showcasing Kyoto's rich geisha culture. After the show, the evening is free to relax, dine, or take a quiet night stroll through Kyoto.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Kyoto Brighton Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]
10	Mon 5/4/2027	Guided tour of Nara	<p>Today begins with a visit to one of Kyoto's most famous landmarks, Fushimi Inari Taisha, renowned for its thousands of vermilion torii gates that create enchanting walking paths up the mountain.</p> <p>Afterwards, travel south to Nara, Japan's ancient capital. In Nara Park, enjoy the charming sight of roaming deer peacefully wandering among the cherry trees, a uniquely Japanese experience. Visit Todaiji Temple, home to the world's largest bronze Buddha statue, and explore other historic sites that showcase Nara's rich cultural heritage. Lunch is served at a local café, providing a relaxed and authentic experience.</p> <p>Return to Kyoto in the afternoon, where the evening is free for you to unwind, explore at your own pace, or enjoy a quiet dinner in the city.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Kyoto Brighton Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
11	Tue 6/4/2027	Guided tour of Kyoto	<p>On your final day in Kyoto, you will have a special surprise cherry blossom experience, giving you one last opportunity to enjoy the season's fleeting beauty.</p> <p>For the rest of the morning, your guide will lead you on a gentle tour of Kyoto's hidden gems, exploring charming streets, tranquil temples, and serene gardens that are often missed by larger and busier tour groups. After the guided tour, enjoy a free afternoon to relax, shop, or stroll at your own pace.</p> <p>In the evening, gather with your fellow travellers for a farewell dinner, a joyful celebration of your journey through Japan's iconic sights, hidden treasures, and unforgettable cherry blossom moments. Share memories, stories, and reflections on a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kyoto Brighton Hotel [Superior Twin/Double]
12	Wed 7/4/2027	Departure	<p>After breakfast, check out of your hotel as your 2027 Cherry Blossom Tour of Japan - Classic Route comes to a close. A transfer will be arranged either to Kansai International Airport or back to Tokyo for your international flight, ensuring a smooth and stress-free departure.</p> <p>For those wishing to extend their stay, Journey to the East can help design a personal post-tour itinerary, whether it's exploring another region of Japan, enjoying additional cultural experiences, or relaxing in a scenic retreat. Speak with one of our friendly Japan travel specialists to plan a tailored extension and continue your journey at your own pace.</p>	Breakfast	
Inclusions for Group Tour			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 11 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns with Western beds) ■ All breakfasts, 7 lunches and 7 dinners ■ Airport meet & greet on arrival ■ Hotel transfer by private transport on arrival ■ All local transport (Green Class seat on shinkansen, train, bus and private minivans) ■ Airport transfer on departure ■ Expert English-speaking tour guides (locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees are included in the itinerary ■ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person) 		

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
		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)		