

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2026 AUTUMN COLOURS SPECTACULAR TOUR OF JAPAN (SIGNATURE)

START: (Refer to website for date) from Tokyo

DURATION: 14 days

PRICE: AUD \$11,940 per person

SINGLE SUPP: AUD \$2,520 per person

FINISH: at Kyoto

GROUP size: 8 people

REF: GAC-26

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 14-day journey showcases Japan at the peak of autumn, blending iconic highlights with lesser-known gems that reveal the true spirit of the land.

Traveling 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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Relax this afternoon and get ready to embark on your 2026 Autumn Colours Spectacular Tour of Japan tomorrow.</p> <p><i>Many of our guests choose to arrive a day or two early to adjust to the time zone and enjoy</i></p>	No meals	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]

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		<i>a more relaxed start. We're happy to arrange extra nights in the same hotel room (subject to availability).</i>		
2	Guided tour of Tokyo	<p>Today, your Japan adventure truly begins as you dive into the spiritual heart of Tokyo's old shitamachi (downtown) district. After breakfast, take a short subway ride to Fukagawa, where the morning unfolds with a visit to Fukagawa Fudo Temple. Here, you'll witness a dramatic Goma fire ritual - a powerful purification ceremony filled with chanting, drumming, and towering flames. Just a short walk away is Tomioka Hachimangu Shrine, steeped in sumo history and vibrant local culture.</p> <p>For lunch, enjoy a specialty dish at a beloved local restaurant, tasting flavours unique to the area. In the afternoon, return to central Tokyo and wander the peaceful paths of Hamarikyu Garden, a former feudal lord's retreat nestled among the city's modern skyline. Surrounded by tidal ponds, meticulously landscaped trees, and a centuries-old teahouse, it's a serene escape in the heart of the metropolis.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]
3	Guided tour of Nikko	<p>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 Shinkansen and local 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In the early evening, return to Tokyo by train. Enjoy a free night to dine at one of the many excellent restaurants near your hotel - whether you're craving sushi, ramen, or something sweet to end the day.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Park Hotel Tokyo [Queen/Twin]

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4	Transfer to and guided tour of Kawaguchiko (Mt Fuji)	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Fuji Ginkei [Japanese style room with futon beddings]
5	Transfer to and guided tour of Matsumoto	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Matsumoto Marunouchi Hotel [Deluxe Double/Twin]
6	Transfer to and guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kanazawa [Superior King or Deluxe Twin]

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7	Guided tour of Kanazawa	<p>Today, dive deeper into Kanazawa's rich cultural heritage with a guided walk through the atmospheric Nagamachi district, where earthen-walled lanes, samurai residences, and stone-paved streets tell the story of the city's feudal past. Step back in time as you learn how this elegant area once housed the samurai of the powerful Maeda clan.</p> <p>Next, 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: dive into the city's museums, browse artisanal shops, or simply enjoy a relaxed stroll through this beautifully preserved cultural gem.</p>	Breakfast	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kanazawa [Superior King or Deluxe Twin]
8	Guided tour of Gokayama and Takayama	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Tokyu Stay Hida-Takayama Musubi-no-Yu [Western style room]
9	Guided tour of Takayama and transfer to Hiroshima	<p>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 deep cultural pride and craftsmanship.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you'll board a series of express 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 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.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	INTERGATE Hiroshima [Superior Double/Twin]

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10	Guided tour of Hiroshima and Miyajima	<p>This morning begins with a moving visit to Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park and Atomic Bomb Museum, timed early 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.</p> <p>After a chance to rest back at your hotel, you'll continue to one of the country's most iconic and spiritual destinations - Miyajima Island. Known for its floating Torii gate, which appears to hover above the sea during high tide, Miyajima has long been considered one of Japan's most scenic and sacred places. This afternoon, a guided walk will take you through its atmospheric streets, past ancient shrines, wild deer, and traditional ryokan inns. By staying overnight on the island, you'll experience a rare calm after the day-trippers depart - perfect for enjoying the peaceful coastal setting, illuminated shrine paths, and the magic of Miyajima under the stars.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Hotel Miyajima Villa [Seaside Style Twin]
11	Guided tour of Miyajima and transfer to Kyoto	<p>This morning, your journey on Miyajima Island continues with a guided visit to the island's spiritual heart - Itsukushima Shrine. Built over water and appearing to float at high tide, this UNESCO World Heritage site dates back to the 6th century and is dedicated to the Shinto deities of the sea, storms, and sun. The shrine's iconic vermilion Torii gate, one of Japan's most photographed landmarks, has welcomed travellers and pilgrims for centuries and remains a breathtaking symbol of harmony between nature and the divine.</p> <p>Afterwards, you'll board a ferry back to the mainland and travel by train to your final destination - Kyoto, the cultural soul of Japan. Arriving by shinkansen, Japan's famed bullet train, you'll be whisked into a city where ancient traditions blend effortlessly with modern life. Upon arrival, you'll visit handpicked gardens glowing with brilliant autumn colours, a seasonal highlight of Kyoto. Later, enjoy an intimate walking tour through the city's quieter backstreets, discovering charming alleys, hidden temples, and artisan corners that many visitors overlook - offering a deeper, more personal encounter with this timeless city.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	The Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo [Deluxe Twin]
12	Guided tour of Kyoto	<p>On your final day in Kyoto - and the last day of this unforgettable journey - you'll begin with an early 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.</p> <p>Next, dive into the flavours of Kyoto with a visit to Nishiki Market, affectionately known as "Kyoto's kitchen." This lively arcade is lined with generations-old food stalls and specialty shops, where you can sample everything from fragrant pickles and sizzling skewers to delicate sweets and seasonal produce. The afternoon is yours to explore Kyoto at your own pace - perhaps with a final visit to a favourite temple, a stroll along the Philosopher's Path, or a last-minute shopping stop. 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.</p>	Breakfast	The Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo [Deluxe Twin]

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13	Guided tour of Arashiyama	<p>Today, 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.</p> <p>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. On your way back to central Kyoto, visit the dazzling Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion), whose gold leaf-covered walls shimmer above a tranquil reflecting pond - one of Japan's most iconic and photogenic landmarks. The evening is yours to enjoy at your own pace, whether you choose to explore Kyoto's lively dining scene, sip matcha in a traditional teahouse, or stroll through lantern-lit streets that glow with centuries of history.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	The Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo [Deluxe Twin]
14	Departure	<p>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 2026 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	Breakfast	
	Inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 13 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

- 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)