

Japan | HIKING THE NAKASENDO TRAIL

DISCOVERY OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN JAPAN | 10 DAYS

April 15-24, 2021

October 11-20, 2021

November 8-17, 2021



TRIP ITINERARY




Boundless
JOURNEYS

1.800.941.8010 | www.boundlessjourneys.com

How we deliver

THE WORLD'S GREAT ADVENTURES

A passion for travel. Simply put, we love to travel, and that infectious spirit is woven into every one of our journeys. Our staff travels the globe searching out hidden-gem inns and lodges, taste testing bistros, trattorias, and noodle stalls, and discovering the trails and plying the waterways of each remarkable destination. When we come home, we separate wheat from chaff, creating memorable adventures that will connect you with the very best qualities of each destination.

Unique, award-winning itineraries. Our flexible, hand-crafted journeys have received accolades from the world's most revered travel publications. Beginning from our appreciation for the world's most breathtaking and interesting destinations, we infuse our journeys with the elements of adventure and exploration that stimulate our souls and enliven our minds. Whether you are looking for a challenging physical expedition or a leisurely cultural exploration, Boundless Journeys has exceptional itineraries to match your sense of adventure.

Insider connections. There is simply no substitute for traveling with a knowledgeable insider, and our expert local guides will open doors for you that other travelers miss, like dinner with their extended family in Peru's Sacred Valley, or meeting an art scholar in Florence. Relationships developed over many years allow you to experience our destinations through a well-connected friend.

Small groups. Although the camaraderie of a group of like-minded travelers often enhances the journey, there can be too much of a good thing! We tread softly, and our average group size is just 8–10 guests, allowing us access to opportunities that would be unthinkable with a larger group.

Flexibility to suit your travel style. We offer both scheduled, small-group departures and custom journeys so that you can choose which works best for you. Not finding exactly what you are looking for? Let us customize a journey to fulfill your travel dreams.

Customer service that goes the extra mile. Having trouble finding flights that work for you? Want to surprise your traveling companion with a bottle of champagne at a tented camp in the Serengeti to celebrate an important milestone? There is no request that is too big—or too small—for our staff to handle. From your first call, we guide you through choosing your trip, provide advice on preparing for your adventure, and hold your hand until you return home.



Multi-year recipient of *Travel + Leisure* magazine's "World's Best Tour Operator"; and recognized by the editors of *National Geographic ADVENTURE* magazine as one of the **Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth**.

Japan | HIKING THE NAKASENDO TRAIL

Thank you for your interest in this fantastic journey to Japan. We have hand-crafted this tour from our own experience and hope you fall in love with the area—as we have!

THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS JOURNEY

Welcome to Japan, where ancient shrines and glass skyscrapers coexist in peaceful contrast, and the intriguing cultural panoply complements the incredible natural beauty found away from the bustling cities.

On this journey, we discover Japan's rustic history and high-tech modernity by exploring the cities of Kyoto and Tokyo, as well as spending a few days walking The Nakasendo Trail. This historic, inn-to-inn, 'road through the mountains' linked Kyoto to Tokyo during Japan's feudal period and was traveled by lords and their retinues, samurai, and merchants. Along the way, 69 'post towns' offered a place for weary travelers to rest before continuing on the next leg of their journey.

Join us as we uncover Japan's unique culture in a way that few have the opportunity to experience, including historic treasures, ancient traditions, outstanding cuisine, and scenic trails.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience aspects of authentic Japanese culture, including visiting a sake brewery, witnessing a traditional tea ceremony, and enjoying a folk music performance.
- Participate in a zen meditation session, or "zazen" at a local temple led by a Zen Buddhist priest.
- Soak in an *onsen*, a traditional Japanese bath, and learn about the customs surrounding this ritual.

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TOUR OVERVIEW



THE BASICS

Duration:	10-day trip
Tour start:	Kyoto
Tour end:	Tokyo
Accommodations:	9 nights in a mix of Western-style hotels, Japanese-style hotels, and traditional Japanese inns
Trip rating:	1 2+ 3 4 5 Easy Strenuous (See page 12 for more information)
Land cost:	\$7,095 per person
Single Supplement:	First two solo travelers: \$855* Additional solo travelers: \$1,355 *Must reserve at least 120 days ahead



WHAT'S INCLUDED

Just pack your bags—we've got you covered! When you're on a Boundless Journeys adventure, every detail is taken care of for you, so you can relax and truly experience each moment. Put your wallet away, leave your travel books behind, fold up your maps, and BE there. Your Boundless Journeys adventure includes:

- Expert leadership
- All accommodations
- All meals as noted in the itinerary
- Local sake and beer with included dinners
- All on-tour transportation, not including airport transfers
- All gratuities except those for your guide, which are at your discretion
- All activities as noted in the itinerary
- Explorers Club savings on your next scheduled, small-group trip (conditions apply)

International airfare (arriving into Osaka and departing out of Tokyo) is not included in the price of your trip. Contact your local travel agency or the airlines directly to make any international flight arrangements you may need. If you would like assistance with your international travel plans, please contact Boundless Journeys for a referral to one of our partners who will best fit your needs.



ITINERARY AT-A-GLANCE

DAY 1

Our introduction to Kyoto commences this afternoon in the lobby of our Kyoto hotel. Meet the guide and enjoy some guided sightseeing before this evening's welcome dinner and tour briefing.

DAY 2

We begin our day with a Zen meditation session at a local temple, followed by a walking tour of some of Kyoto's most iconic temples and shrines.

DAY 3

Enjoy a hike from Kurama Temple to Kibune shrine and visit a local sake brewery and learn how this iconic Japanese drink is made.

DAY 4

Hike up to a scenic viewpoint overlooking the town of Nara, visiting Nara's unique and notable sites along the way.

DAY 5

Leave the modern cities behind as we hike a portion of the Nakasendo Trail between the post towns of Magome and Tsumago.

DAY 6

Catch a glimpse of Mt. Ontake in the distance while hiking along the Kaida Plateau.

DAY 7

Begin today's hike along the Nakasendo at the charming post town of Nagiso. Hike from Nagiso to Mukaida. Enjoy a traditional folk songs performance in the evening at our inn.

DAY 8

Cross the challenging Torii-toge Pass while hiking from Yabuhara to the picturesque post town of Narai.

DAY 9

Transfer to Tokyo and in the evening, enjoy a traditional Japanese musical performance before a celebratory farewell dinner.

DAY 10

Departure or spend additional post-tour days exploring Tokyo independently.

PLEASE NOTE: *This is a typical itinerary, and actual activities may vary to take advantage of weather conditions, local events and to allow serendipity to play a hand in your experience. Accommodations are as outlined in the itinerary, although we reserve the right to change these should the need arise. See our booking terms and conditions for more information about our change policy.*

THE JOURNEY



DAY 1: Nijo Castle & Tea Ceremony

Activity Overview: Walking, sightseeing

Activity Level: Easy

Activity Length: 3-4 hours

The official start of our tour begins with in the lobby of our Kyoto hotel where we meet our guide at 1:00 pm. We embark on a cultural exploration of Kyoto beginning with a visit to Nijo Castle, which was the seat of power for the Shoguns from the early 17th to 20th centuries. The castle has an inner and outer moat, and the central Ninomaru Palace—comprised of separate chambers connected by long halls—is built almost entirely of Hinoki Cypress. Nijo Castle is also a famous example of the unique “nightingale floors.”

Next, we participate in a tea ceremony. Learn about the fascinating traditions surrounding this centuries old ritual, with each carefully choreographed movement steeped in significance. The ceremony’s origin can be traced to Buddhism, and this “way of the tea” still represents the principles of harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility as it did thousands of years ago.

This evening, we head to Kyoto’s famous Gion District to enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant, which gives an introduction to the best of traditional Japanese specialties. Perhaps on our way to or from the restaurant we’ll see *geiko* (geisha) or *maiko* (apprentice geisha) on their way to an engagement at one of the many exclusive, upscale teahouses, known as *ochayas*, located in the Gion District.

Accommodation: Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo, Kyoto

Meals: D

DAY 2: Zen Meditation; Fushimi Inari

Activity Overview: Walking, hiking, sightseeing

Activity Level: Easy

Activity Length: 4-5 hours

We begin our morning with a visit to Tofuku-ji Temple to tour its elegant grounds and see its well-known Zen rock garden, a classic example where each and every element is thoughtfully arranged to aid in a calm mind for meditation.

We then have the opportunity to join a meditation session, or *Zazen*, at a local temple. This unique experience allows you to explore the serenity of this ancient Zen Buddhist practice. The aim of this seated meditation is to cultivate a still and calm mind, and the tranquil temple grounds aid us in achieving this peaceful state.

Our final stop this afternoon is to see the stunning Shinto shrine complex of Fushimi Inari, which is most famous for its numerous red torii gates. The shrine’s ancient origins can be traced back to the worship of the Shinto god of rice, but these days, wealthy individuals or companies will donate a red torii gate to ensure prosperity and success. Stone statues of foxes, once considered the messengers of the gods, greet visitors at the entrance of the main shrine complex. Smaller shrines and the many bright red torii gates are spread across the entire Inari mountain, which rises 764 ft above sea level. We hike a portion of it to gain scenic views of the city of Kyoto.

Accommodation: Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo, Kyoto

Meals: B, L, D



DAY 3: Kurama to Kibune Hike

Activity Overview: Walking, hiking, sightseeing

Activity Level: Easy to moderate with elevation gain of 1,077' and loss of 1,381'

Activity Length: 3 hours, about 4 miles'

Today, we start off in the hills of northern Kyoto on sacred Mount Kurama. Here, Samurai trained with mountain Buddhist practitioners in the 12th century. From Kurama Temple, we hike to the Kifune Shrine, known for bringing good fortune to those seeking luck in love. Dedicated to the local god of water, Takaokami no Kami, the shrine's proximity to the source of the Kamogawa River has made it both a spiritual place of healing and a popular escape from the city's summer heat.

Our hike begins with a steep and long ascent up stone steps to the Kurama Temple. We stop to take in the beautiful scenery and spend time at the shrines and smaller temples along the way, learning more about Japanese history, culture, and religion as we go.

After lunch in Kyoto, we visit a sake brewery to learn how this iconic Japanese drink is made. Sake is only brewed in the winter months when the delicate *koji* molds can work their magic and provide the necessary fermentation. We sample some of the locally-made sake and gain a new appreciation for how it is produced. This evening, you may dine on your own either at the hotel or at one of Kyoto's many restaurants. Your guide or the hotel's concierge can provide you with restaurant recommendations.

Accommodation: Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo, Kyoto

Meals: B, L

DAY 4: Explore Nara

Activity Overview: Walking, hiking, sightseeing

Activity Level: Easy

Activity Length: 4-5 hours, about 6 miles

Train Travel Time: Approximately 1 hour

This morning, we bid farewell to Kyoto and travel by train to Nara, Japan's first capital and second only to Kyoto in significance of cultural legacy. Nara is a compact city with eight UNESCO World Heritage sites, many of which are in or near Nara Park. Our guide leads us on a walk through the park, known for its free-roaming spotted deer. According to legend, a god named Takemikazuchi arrived in Nara on a deer to guard the newly-built capital. Ever since, the deer here have been regarded as sacred animals and protectors of the city.

Upon arrival in Nara we walk from the train station to Todai-ji Temple, the Japanese headquarters of the Kegon school of Buddhism and famous for housing the largest bronze Buddha statue in the world. We then begin our hike up to Mount Wakakusayama (1,122'), which offers unobstructed views of the city, park, and temple complexes below.

The evening is once again yours to spend as you like: exploring Nara on your own, dining at a restaurant of your choice, or simply relaxing in preparation for tomorrow's hike

Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Nara, Nara

Meals: B, L

DAY 5: Hike from Magome to Tsumago

Activity Overview: Hiking

Activity Level: Easy to moderate with elevation gain of 1,069' and elevation loss of 1,410'

Activity Length: 3 hours, about 5 miles

Travel Time: 3-4 hours

Today, we send our luggage ahead to Kiso Fukushima and travel with overnight essentials in our backpacks. After breakfast, we travel via train and local bus to Magome, where we begin our journey along the Nakasendo Trail. Our hike crosses Magome Pass, one of the more challenging sections of the trail.

The Nakasendo Trail was part of a network of ancient roads that connected Kyoto and Tokyo. Along the way, post towns known as *juku* allowed travelers to rest overnight. This tradition is alive in its own way with family-run guesthouses, or *minshuku*, that still exist along the route and offer a chance to experience the Nakasendo Trail as it has been walked for centuries.

Upon arrival in Tsumago, we shuttle to our Japanese-style hotel for the evening. Tonight, we may enjoy a traditional Japanese bath in the inn's famous *onsen*.

Accommodation: Yamaka no yu Ryokan, Kiso

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 6: Kaida Kogen Hiking

Activity Overview: Hiking

Activity Level: Moderate with elevation gain of 770' and loss of 1,095'

Activity Length: 2 hours, about 3 miles

Continuing on the Nakasendo, we hike around the Kaida Plateau, a particularly beautiful part of the Nagano Prefecture. Portions of our hike this morning offer views of Japan's most sacred mountain and its second highest volcano, Mt. Ontake, which reaches an elevation of 10,062'. These surrounding higher elevation highlands are home to the rare, native Kiso horses, of which only about 50 remain. We begin our hike at a Kiso horse farm and wind through the alpine forests of the plateau, eventually ending at the 300' tall Karasawa Falls.

Once again, we have the option to enjoy a traditional onsen bath this evening before or after dinner. As is common in *ryokans*, dinner is elaborately prepared and presented, highlighting seasonal ingredients in local specialties.

Accommodation: Onyado Tsutaya Ryokan, Kiso-Fukushima

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7: Hike from Nagiso to Mukaida

Activity Overview: Hiking

Activity Level: Moderate with elevation gain of 1,555' and loss of 604'

Activity Length: 4 hours, about 6 miles

Today, we hike a longer section of the trail, which travels through quiet villages, small valleys dotted with rice paddies, and forests of bamboo and Japanese cedar. Along the way, you may notice stone statues of Jizo. He is usually depicted as a monk—often bald, carrying a staff—with features resembling that of a child. In Japanese Buddhism, Jizo is a principal *bodhisattva* (similar to a saint) known for postponing Buddhahood in order to protect children and travelers—hence his frequent presence along the Nakasendo Trail.

We enjoy a trailside picnic lunch before continuing on to Mukaida, from where we are transferred to Kiso-Fukushima. This evening at our inn, we enjoy a performance of Kisobushi songs—traditional folk songs from the Kiso District of the Nagano Prefecture. These songs tell the stories of local heroes, the mountains, rivers, and people who live there.

Accommodation: Onyado Tsutaya Ryokan, Kiso-Fukushima

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 8: Hike from Yabuhara to Narai

Activity Overview: Sightseeing, hiking

Activity Level: Moderate with elevation gain of 1,128' and loss of 885'

Activity Length: 3 hours, about 4 miles

This morning, we again send our luggage ahead to our hotel in Tokyo and travel with overnight essentials in our backpacks.



We begin our day with a visit to the replica Fukushima checkpoint, where travelers on the Nakasendo were required to check-in and present identification documents to verify their travel along the trail. Nearby, we visit the Yamamura residence. This reconstructed building was the house of the local governor who oversaw the checkpoint. It has a number of Edo Period relics, including original documents, ceramics, weapons, and clothing.

Our hike today takes us over the challenging Torii Pass to Narai, which during the Edo Period marked the halfway point between Kyoto and Tokyo. Once known as “Narai of 1,000 Inns,” it was the most prosperous of the 69 post towns along the Nakasendo. Restored homes line the long streets, evoking a sense of the wealth that once set this village apart from others.

We have time to explore Narai before checking in to our traditional Japanese guesthouse for the evening.

Accommodation: Iseya Minshuku, Narai

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 9: Sightseeing in Tokyo

Activity Overview: Sightseeing

Activity Level: Easy

Activity Length: 2-3 hours

Train Travel Time: About 3.5 hours

After breakfast, we depart for Tokyo, as our time hiking the Nakasendo Trail has come to an end. Upon arrival in Tokyo we enjoy lunch at our hotel and if time allows, an afternoon of sightseeing in Japan’s capital, visiting the

popular Asakusa District and seeing the Senso-ji Temple and Asakusa Shrine.

In the evening we witness an hour long musical performance featuring traditional Japanese musical instruments. The performance is held at a small, intimate venue where we are able to learn about each instrument and its place in Japanese musical history and culture. Afterwards, we celebrate our successful journey along the Nakasendo with our final farewell dinner.

Accommodation: Park Hotel, Tokyo

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 10: Departure

Our tour ends after breakfast. Tokyo is yours to explore independently. Your guide or the hotel front desk can assist you with arranging your departure airport transfer.

Meals: B

ACCOMMODATIONS

In the spirit of venturing off of the beaten tourist path and providing a unique exploration of Japan, we stay in traditional Japanese inns while hiking along the Nakasendo. The Japanese-style accommodations typically consist of traditional décor and architecture, including tatami floors, paper walls, and futon bedding laid out on the floor. A truly authentic experience! These accommodations are comfortable and offer all the necessary facilities, but are more basic compared to the Western-style hotels we stay at in Kyoto and Tokyo. We believe that any inconveniences due to these more modest offerings far outweigh the unforgettable experience of staying at a traditional Japanese inn. Please contact Boundless Journeys if you would like to learn more.



NIGHTS 1, 2, 3

Royal Park Hotel Kyoto Sanjo

604-8004 Kawaramachi Higashi-iru, Sanjo-dori, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto

Tel: +81 75 241 1111

The Royal Park Hotel is located in Kawaramachi-Sanjon, the heart of Kyoto. Close to many popular tourist destinations, the hotel features a sleek, modern design.



NIGHT 4

Hotel Nikko Nara

8-1 Sanjo Honmachi, Nara 630-8122, Nara Prefecture

Tel: +81 742 35 8831

Hotel Nikko Nara is conveniently located, within walking distance to many of the popular sites in Nara, as well as close to many restaurants, shops, and the train station.



NIGHT 5

Yamaka no yu Ryokan

3109-1 Kaida Kogen Nishino, Kiso-machi, Kiso-gun, Nagano 397-0302

Tel: +81 264 44 2010

This traditional ryokan boasts views of Mt. Ontake. Rooms are Japanese style with tatami flooring and futon bedding. Relax in a semi-outdoor hot spring bath.



NIGHTS 6, 7

Onyado Tsutaya Ryokan

5162 Fukushima, Kiso-machi, Kiso-gun, Nagano 397-0001

Tel: +81 264 22 2010

This traditional Japanese-style inn has a large open-air onsen bath overlooking the Kiso River. Meals are prepared using local, fresh ingredients.



NIGHT 8

Iseya Minshuku

388 Narai, Shiojiri-shi, Nagano-ken, 399-6303

Tel: +81 0264 34 3051

Originally founded in 1818 as a small general store, this traditional inn features the architectural styles of the late Edo Period. Rooms are bright, cozy, and reminiscent of “Old Japan” along the Nakasendo Trail.



NIGHT 9

Park Hotel

Shiodome Media Tower 1-7-1 Higashi Shimbashi

Minato-ku 1057227 Tokyo

Tel: + 81 3 6252 1111

Located on the 25th floor of the Shiodome Media Tower, the Park Hotel Tokyo offers city views and quality service.

WHAT TO EXPECT



TRIP RATING

Boundless Journeys' trips are designed for energetic and flexible individuals who like to be active and have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. This trip is rated 2+, easy to moderate, on a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the most strenuous). Japan's rolling hills and forest paths offer elevations ranging from sea level to 5,000 feet. Our walks and hikes range from 3 to 5 hours (4 to 6 miles), on well-maintained dirt trails, paved city streets, and the occasional stone steps. Elevation changes range from negligible amounts on our city walks, to an approximate 2,600' ascent and 1,900' descent on our most challenging hiking days.

PREPARING FOR THIS TRIP

It is very important that you realistically assess your physical condition with regard to the demands of this trip. The more well-prepared you are for the activities, the more you will enjoy yourself. As a general guideline, we suggest that you engage in easy to moderate aerobic activities (such as walking, hiking, jogging, or cycling) for at least 30-45 minutes several times a week for 4-6 weeks before the trip. If you live in a flat area, try to incorporate some stairs into your workout, or use a treadmill with varying incline capability (consult your doctor before undertaking any new fitness program). Please contact us if you have any doubts regarding your physical match with this tour.

WHEN TO GO

Spring and autumn are generally the best times to visit Japan, when there is less chance of rainfall and temperatures are more mild. The delicate cherry blossoms in the spring and vivid hues of autumn leaves are visually stunning against the landscape.

WEATHER

Japan's average temperatures and weather patterns can vary greatly; while the north sees harsh winters, central Japan has a more temperate climate and the southern islands are practically tropical. The region we will be visiting sees four distinct seasons.

Hi/Lo °F	April	October	November
Kyoto	66/44	71/51	60/41
Nara	63/49	71/58	61/49
Kiso	62/38	66/46	55/34
Tokyo	66/51	71/60	62/50

You may obtain more detailed weather information at www.weatherbase.com.

TRAVELER'S RESPONSIBILITY

As a trip participant, you have responsibilities to Boundless Journeys, your fellow travelers and guide, and the local people you encounter. This includes understanding and preparing for the conditions described in the itinerary, ensuring it meets your interests and abilities, and following the health and safety guidelines of Boundless Journeys, local authorities, and/or the CDC. At their discretion, a guide may ask a guest to leave the trip if further participation may be detrimental to the individual or other participants.

We strongly urge any guest feeling ill shortly before departure to cancel their trip. To help cover your investment, we highly recommend purchasing travel insurance with supplemental "Cancel for Any Reason" coverage. If you feel unwell during the tour, please immediately inform your guide, who can help take the appropriate next steps. We appreciate your cooperation.

SMALL GROUP TRAVEL



THE BOUNDLESS JOURNEYS DIFFERENCE

Boundless Journeys' private, custom trips allow you to enjoy itineraries developed from our years of travel experience, and tailor them to suit your travel style. Go at your pace... build in some leisure time... the choice is yours.

Small group travel affords us the opportunity to seek out the most remote and exotic destinations on the planet. Often we are exploring these locales with just 6-12 guests. The nature of active group travel is such that not all participants have the same ability level or interests. Traveling at a pace that is comfortable for the entire group, with a spirit of flexibility and adventure, are all part of this intimate experience.

OUR GUIDES

With a Boundless Journeys guide, your experience is that of friend and local adventurer. Although you will never know they are at work—the mark of a truly great leader—our guides make magical things happen and add a dimension to your trip that you could not experience on your own. Over the years we have forged bonds with some of the best guides in the world, and we typically work with a small team of guides in each region.

CUISINE

Most meals will be Japanese cuisine, though breakfast options in Western-style hotels may include more familiar choices. The base ingredient of most Japanese dishes is sticky white rice. Soybeans are another staple and are used in miso soup, tofu, bean curd, and soy sauce. Donburi is a common dish that translates literally to “rice bowl,” and refers to a bowl of fried rice with a topping such as a deep-fried pork cutlet with an egg or beef and onion. Bowls of soba or udon noodles are also popular, often served in broth with egg, onion, and deep-fried tofu. Perhaps Japan's most well-known food export, sushi (with rice) and sashimi (fresh sliced raw fish) are also quite popular, though relatively more expensive and therefore eaten less frequently. Grilled and fried meat dishes are a more recent

addition to Japanese cuisine; beef, pork, and chicken are now common in tempura dishes, which are batter fried, and in *teppanyaki*, which refers to meat grilled on a hot plate. Vegetarian options are available but may be limited. Strict vegan or gluten-free diets are difficult to accommodate due to the prevalence of dashi, miso, and soy sauce.

DRINKS WITH MEALS

At Boundless Journeys, we believe group dinners are a time to celebrate our day, while enjoying the best of local cuisine and good company. In keeping with this spirit, we typically include standard beer, wine, and sake with group dinners. If you prefer premium wine or liquor, please feel free to order what you like, and you may settle your tab at the end of the meal.

TRANSPORTATION

On-tour transportation makes use of Japan's clean and efficient trains, as well as the occasional local bus or shuttle bus/van. Taxis may also be occasionally used for shorter transfers to train stations and hotels.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We use a mix of Western-style hotels and Japanese-style inns and guesthouses on this tour. (See page 10 for more info.) Due to availability and cultural norms, on nights 5-8 single travelers may be required to share a room with a fellow traveler of the same gender. Also during those nights, bathing facilities may be limited to the traditional onsen experience. There may be one night where en suite bathrooms are unavailable.

OUR JAPAN TEAM

TRIP MANAGER



Kristen Bernarsky

Originally from Pennsylvania, Kristen first came to Vermont for college. She then spent two years teaching in Asia before returning to Vermont permanently. Kristen joined the Boundless Journeys home team in 2015 as our guest services coordinator and moved into a destination manager role shortly thereafter. She is the manager for Palau and our Asia adventures, having developed our Japan and Nepal trek itineraries. Kristen enjoys sunset hikes and back-country skiing with her husband and their three dogs.

GUIDES

With a Boundless Journeys guide, your experience is that of friend and local adventurer. We believe strongly in working with local guides, experts in the areas to which we travel, and they hold the keys to unlocking the hidden delights of your chosen destination. Although you will never know they are at work—the mark of a truly great leader—our guides make magical things happen and add a dimension to your trip that you could not experience on your own.

Over the years we have forged bonds with some of the best guides in the world, and we typically work with a small team of guides in each region. You will be informed of the guide for your trip one month prior to your departure.



Atsuko Iketsu

Atsuko was born in Osaka, an old merchant city, and grew up in Kamakura, an ancient capital of the samurais. As a child, she visited many temples and shrines, which fostered her love for Japanese culture at a young age. After completing her French studies at Sophia University in Tokyo, she explored the world, living in Los Angeles, Bangkok, London, and Paris. After returning to Japan, she discovered a passion for introducing Japanese culture to visitors and volunteered as a guide at the Edo-Tokyo Museum. Now as a tour guide leading active walking and cultural tours, she always does her best to show guests the real beauty of Japan and help them connect with the Japanese way of thinking and living. Atsuko looks forward to welcoming you to her country!



Hiroko Yuki

Hiroko lives in her native home in the Chiba prefecture. She began her career in tourism when she worked on an island in the Maldives as a tour operator in the late 1980's. Hiroko returned to Japan and became a tour leader for Japanese group tours overseas, thereby gaining practical experience and communication skills working in different cultures. Hiroko briefly worked in education, but came back to tourism with an earnest desire to spend time with travelers from all over the world! Her goals as a guide are to facilitate memorable experiences full of interactive opportunities and for her guests. In her free time, Hiroko loves to cook, read, and visit rustic Onsen (hot spring) places in the countryside after trail walks. In recent years, she has enjoyed growing organic rice with her close friends.

NEXT STEPS



TO MAKE A RESERVATION

You can call Boundless Journeys at 800-941-8010, request a reservation online, or contact your travel agent. We will confirm your spot with a deposit of \$500 per person and the payment of internal airfare, payable by check or credit card.

ONCE YOU RESERVE

As soon as you confirm your adventure, we will provide you with an extensive, detailed trip planner that includes arrival and departure instructions, a complete packing list, regional information, required documents, a reading list, and other details.

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

Please check our Terms & Conditions page on our website for our comprehensive cancellation and refund policies: www.boundlessjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions.

TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE

In addition to your detailed trip planner, we will email you a quote for Travel Guard trip insurance. Please let us know if you would like us to purchase a policy on your behalf. Boundless Journeys strongly recommends purchasing Trip Insurance.

QUESTIONS? WHICH TRIP IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Adventure travel may involve exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, and activities that may be new to you. If you have any questions about the level of comfort, difficulty, or activities included on your trip, please call Boundless Journeys at 800-941-8010, or email us at info@boundlessjourneys.com. Our travel experts look forward to helping you select the perfect adventure.

BOUNDLESS BEYOND



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

At Boundless Journeys, our goal is to create meaningful experiences that protect the delicate ecosystems and attributes of every location we visit. We aim to educate our guests on the best responsible travel practices for each destination.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO

Making connections. Our local guides offer insider knowledge of their country, including tips on etiquette and customs. They facilitate meaningful interactions with the people and places we visit, such as dinner at the home of a local family. While you may arrive in a destination as a visitor, you leave with a deeper understanding and connection to each place.

Going local. Boundless Journeys' small group size stems from a desire to provide a more intimate traveler experience, giving us the freedom to move through the tight alleys of old towns on foot, eat and sleep at traditional guesthouses, participate in immersive cultural exchanges, and leave a smaller footprint on all of the locales we visit. This mobility allows us to support local economies directly, forging strong relationships with our partners and friends abroad as we return year after year.

Respecting people and the environment. We support organizations working to protect ecosystems and improve the livelihoods of local communities. On many of our trips, we explore stunning natural landscapes where conservation is of the utmost importance. As visitors, we practice Leave No Trace ethics and actively contribute to the conservation of parks and protected areas.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Give back. Instead of receiving a Boundless Journeys t-shirt or water bottle, you can opt to donate the value of your gift to our travel scholarship fund, which will be awarded to a local student for an educational or service-based travel opportunity.

Learn more. Visit boundlessjourneys.com/responsible-travel to read more about how our values are reflected in our trip offerings. We also offer a selection of Resources for the Responsible Traveler, which suggests ways to tread lightly and ensure your journey has a positive impact.

Join us. Boundless Journeys has taken the Travelers Against Plastic company pledge to promote sustainable travel and encourage travelers to avoid buying bottled water when they travel. You can take the pledge at travelersagainstplastic.org.

CONSERVATION IN ACTION

Boundless Journeys is a proud member of the Adventure Travel and Trade Association, a global network of adventure seekers who believe in the protection and promotion of local communities and wilderness areas.

