



## Trails of Japan Dossier

### Immerse Yourself | 14 Days | Active

Tokyo – Fuji Five Lakes – Nagano – Snow Monkeys – Takayama – Kyoto – Koya-san – Osaka

Traditional versus modern, nature versus urban – Japan is a land of contrasts. This exhilarating tour encompasses it all, delving deeper into Japan's rich past, present and future, covering robot restaurants to tranquil temples to potent saké and all that's in between.

#### Tour Highlights:

- Enjoy the Robot Restaurant
- Take a Taiko drumming class
- Hike around Mt Fuji
- Visit the Snow Monkeys
- Explore sacred Koyasan
- Taste sake at a brewery



## Trails of Japan tour inclusions

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- Meals as stated on your itinerary
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English-speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more travellers) or Local Guides

*Personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, tipping, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary are at your own expense.*

## Immerse Yourself

Designed for those who wish to be further immersed in the authentic charm of Asia; our Immerse Yourself Tours include more cultural and active experiences. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and Local Guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience. Our Discovery tours include:

- Cycling and walking through classic sites
- Unique cultural experiences and encounters
- Off the beaten track destinations
- More evenings at leisure for independent exploration

## Active

'Trails of Japan' is an **active** tour. Active tours require a good level of fitness, as they are physically more demanding. They may involve hiking, and some travel to remote, high altitude areas where tourist facilities are less developed.

Our National Escort and Local Guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

## Country Profile: Japan

Japan is a fascinating country situated in northeast Asia. It is comprised of more than 4,000 islands - the main four being Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. The Japanese name for Japan is 'Nippon' or 'Nihon' meaning 'sun origin' and is often translated as 'Land of the Rising Sun'. It is a country of contrasts; engaging a combination of futuristic cities, ancient culture and diverse scenery. Japan is famous for its relatively short Cherry Blossom season.

## Itinerary Changes

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip. Itinerary changes are based on brochure to brochure, year on year changes.

### Changes:

- On day four previously there was a visit to the Edo-Tokyo Museum, this visit may now be changed to either the Edo-Tokyo Museum OR the Tokyo National Museum. Both museums will provide our customers with interesting insight into Tokyo's history.
- The cruise on Lake Ashi, previously on day six, has been removed as it added too much driving time.
- The visit to the Monkey Park has been moved from day seven to day six, this leaves time on day six to explore Kamisannomachi Street in Takayama. Here customers will have free time and can sample the street food (at their own expense) with the help of the guide.

- The cycling experience on day nine in Kyoto has been changed from free time in the Arashiyama district with bike hire to a half day city cycle tour in order to improve the customers experience.

**Please note:** Kiyomizu Temple is undergoing renovations which may last until 2020. customers can still visit the temple and the shrines around it and their touring will not be affected. If customers require any further details, please refer them to the link: <http://www.kiyomizudera.or.jp/en/news/>

## Joining Your Tour

The tour is 14 days in duration including international flights. Travellers booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the starting point. Join the tour on day two in Tokyo and end the tour on Day 13 in Osaka. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only, the price includes your arrival/ departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to reservations.

## Important Information Regarding Itinerary Changes and Flight Delays

Due to unforeseen circumstances, flights can be delayed, and therefore connecting flights may be missed. If you find yourself in this situation, please contact our Japan office on **+81 03 6895 8377 (24 hours)** to urgently advise your arrival details have changed. Please ensure you have your trip number, tour name (both included in your final documentation) and new arrival details (flight number and arrival time) handy to pass on to our local office in Japan. This will ensure your National Escort/Local Guide can be informed of your most up to date information and ensure someone is at the airport to meet you on arrival.

If we are not advised of late changes and missed connections, Wendy Wu Tours cannot guarantee someone will be able to meet you upon arrival in Japan as our local office will have no way of knowing which flight you will be arriving on. Wendy Wu Tours will not be responsible for providing reimbursement of transportation costs from the airport to your hotel in the event that our local office was not advised of changes to arrival time.

## Trails of Japan Itinerary

### DAYS 1-2: FLY TO TOKYO

Fly overnight to Tokyo, the capital of Japan and transfer approximately one and a half hours to your hotel. The remainder of your day is at leisure.

Meals included – none

*Please note: Early check in is not included today. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant. Transfers will differ depending on group size, but you may share a coach with other travellers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour.*

### Destination Information

**Tokyo** – One of the world's most cutting edge capital cities, Tokyo is a city of contrasts, famous for its neon-lit landscape, towering skyscrapers, peaceful shrines and lovingly tended gardens. Although long the political and cultural centre of Japan, Tokyo became the official capital when the Meiji Emperor moved it to Tokyo in 1867.

### DAY 3: DISCOVER TOKYO

Tokyo is the ultimate 24-hour city, but look behind its frantic, high-tech frontage and you'll find plenty of tranquil backstreets and old temples to explore.

This morning, you will be picked up by coach for a city tour; you will spend approximately three to four hours on foot sightseeing. Head to the first observatory of the Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views over the city before taking a wander through the district of Asakusa, stopping at the Sensoji Temple and Nakamise shopping street.

Take a look at the famous Shibuya Crossing, the Meiji Shrine and the vibrant district of Harajuku. Finally, visit the Robot Restaurant for a surreal sci-fi experience. Please note dinner is not included in the Robot Restaurant, your visit is to experience the show, your guide will be happy to recommend restaurants for your evening meal.

Meals included – Breakfast

### Destination Information

**Tokyo Skytree** – The tallest structure in Japan and the tallest tower in the world; Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower and is earthquake resistant.

**Sensoji Temple** – An ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo; the Sensoji temple was originally founded in the seventh century. The temple adorns an image of the

Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the Sumida River in Tokyo.

**Meiji Shrine** – Located in a huge evergreen forest the Meiji Shrine is dedicated to the spirits of Emperor Meiji and his wife Empress Shoken.

**Robot restaurant** – For a futuristic, neon, cabaret style experience head to the Robot Restaurant found in the Shinjuku district of Tokyo.

#### **DAY 4: TOKYO - JAPANESE DRUMMING**

In the morning, take part in a traditional Japanese drumming (Taiko) class. Next, visit Tokyo's electronics district to see the neon bill boarded streets and stop for a drink at the Maid Café, embracing Tokyo's latest themed café craze. This afternoon, explore the Edo Tokyo Museum or the Tokyo National Museum (which you visit is dependent on tour departure date) and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

For May and September departures only: Tickets to a Sumo tournament are included. Many of Japan's most ancient traditions are preserved in the sport; the ritual involved in the performance is just as fascinating to watch as the sport itself.

Meals included - Breakfast

#### **Destination Information**

**Taiko** – Using large drums, Taiko is an ancient Japanese form of percussion which has become a popular musical art form involving tightly choreographed movements.

**Maid Café** – One of Japan's more bizarre themed establishments is the Maid Café, where waitresses dressed in maid costumes serve your drinks, a popular craze in Tokyo at the moment.

#### **DAY 5: TOKYO – FUJI FIVE LAKES**

This morning, transfer two and a half hours to Mount Fuji to take a three hour trek around the base of this iconic mountain. You will take an easy hike through alpine forest, across meadows and around lakes at the base of this impressive mountain. Take a short transfer to your hotel and check in for your overnight stay.

*In the Fuji Five Lakes area we use a selection of hotels, some of which are more traditional in style. The rooms in these hotels typically feature Japanese elements. You may sleep on a futon with the mattress lying directly on a tatami mat floor. This is an opportunity to experience a more authentic style of Japanese accommodation.*

Meals included - Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Destination Information**

**Mount Fuji** – At 3,776m, Mount Fuji is the highest of Japan's mountains and an iconic symbol of the country.

Mount Fuji is notoriously shy and is often enveloped by clouds.

**Fuji Five Lakes** - Formed by previous Mount Fuji eruptions, the Fuji Five Lakes is a region at the base of Mount Fuji made up of five beautiful lakes.

#### **DAY 6: FUJI FIVE LAKES – NAGANO**

Travel to Matsumoto, a journey of three to five hours, and explore the magnificent Matsumoto Castle. Continue to Nagano, stopping in Yudanaka to visit the resident Japanese Snow Monkeys at Jigokudani Yaen-Koen (Monkey Park). You will walk through the forested valley, from the bus park it takes between 25 to 35 minutes along paths, occasionally on an incline, to the main pool where the monkeys bathe. Accustomed to humans, the monkeys can be observed from very close and almost completely ignore their human guests.

Meals included – Breakfast

#### **Destination Information**

**Matsumoto Castle** – Known as the 'Crow Castle' due to its dark black exterior, the Matsumoto Castle dates back to the 16th century and is the oldest wooden castle in Japan.

**Nagano** - The host city of the 1998 Winter Olympics, Nagano is the main access point for the Japanese Alps. In the winter a blanket of snow covers the rural landscape you will travel through to reach this picturesque mountain city.

**Jigokudani Yaen-Koen** – Home to Japanese Macaques, also known as Snow Monkeys, Jigokudani literally means 'hell's valley'. Named this because of the steam and boiling water that bubbles out of small crevices in the ground. It is in the baths of this hot water that the resident Japanese Macaques like to soak. The monkeys live in large social groups, and it can be quite entertaining to watch their interactions.

#### **DAY 7: NAGANO – TAKAYAMA**

This morning, travel two hours to Hotaka to ride the Shin-Hotaka Ropeway into the Japanese Alps. You will reach the observation platform at 2,156 metres high to get stunning views of the surrounding mountains. Drive one and a half hours to Takayama, where you will have some free time to explore Kamisannomachi Street and sample the street food on offer (at your own expense). Check in to your hotel and enjoy a traditional dinner including Hida Beef.

Tonight's accommodation is a Ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn, where you will find Tatami (Straw mat) flooring and Futon bedding to sleep on. There will be an Onsen hot spring bath at the hotel for you to relax in and experience this traditional Japanese pastime.

Meals included - Breakfast, Dinner

*Please note the ropeway may be closed due to strong winds, if this is the case, you will continue directly to Takayama where alternative sightseeing will be arranged.*

#### **Destination Information**

**Takayama** - Boasting one of Japan's most atmospheric townscapes, the layout of the town dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is home to much Meiji architecture.

#### **DAY 8: TAKAYAMA – KYOTO**

Today, take the bullet train to Kyoto. The journey consists of two trains, firstly the Limited express, which takes approximately two and a half hours to Nagoya, before changing to the Shinkansen bullet train for the 40-minute journey to Kyoto. On arrival this afternoon, visit the Fushimi Inari Shrine (Taisha) and Kiyomizu Temple. Next, take a stroll around the old neighbourhoods of Higashiyama and Gion, the geisha district with a stop at Gion Corner.

Meals included – Breakfast

*Please note: Your luggage will be transferred separately and will not arrive until the following day so you will need to pack a separate overnight bag for your first night in Kyoto.*

*Please note: Kiyomizu Temple is undergoing renovations which may last until 2020. You can still visit the temple and the shrines around it and your touring will not be affected. If you require any further details, please visit the link: <http://www.kiyomizudera.or.jp/en/news/>*

#### **Destination Information**

**Kyoto** – Was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years until 1867 when it was moved to Tokyo. Many national treasures can be found in Kyoto and in nearby Nara, including old shrines and temples, screen paintings, beautiful gardens, and statues of Buddha.

**Fushimi Inari Taisha** – Famous for its brilliant red traditional torii gates, Fushimi Inari shrine sits at the base of the mountain also called Inari and is the head shrine for 40,000 Inari shrines throughout the country.

**Kiyomizu Temple** – Meaning 'Pure Water Temple', Kiyomizu is one of the most celebrated temples of Japan and houses the Jishu Shrine dedicated to the deity of love.

#### **DAY 9: KYOTO**

This morning, take a half day tour of the city by bicycle. You will transfer by coach from the hotel to Kinkaku-ji, the 'Golden Pavilion' where your cycle tour will begin. Your next stop will be Japan's most famous classical garden – Ryoan-ji, continuing to the Arashiyama district where your cycle tour ends. You will be provided with a helmet for today's cycling tour. Your group will be divided into smaller groups of approximately six people and each small group will be accompanied by a guide. The tour will cover a distance of approximately 10km at a leisurely pace.

This afternoon, you will have some free time to explore the Bamboo forest before witnessing the rituals involved in the preparation and pouring of matcha tea in a traditional tea ceremony.

Meals included – Breakfast

#### **Destination Information**

**Kinkaku-Ji Temple** - A Buddhist temple and is an excellent example of Japanese garden design. The structure is a brilliant golden hue colour and is very minimalistic.

**Ryoan-Ji Temple** - is a Zen temple which is renowned for its garden which features a dry, sand landscape with large rocks and smooth pebbles.

**Arashiyama** – Famed for the Bamboo grove, Arashiyama is a sightseeing district of Kyoto filled with temples and shrines.

#### **DAY 10: KYOTO – KOYA-SAN**

This morning, explore the craft of Kimono creation at Nishijin Textile Centre, then continue your tour learning the art of Origami and trying on kimonos. Transfer to Koya-San for your overnight stay in a 13<sup>th</sup> century temple in a traditional tatami room. The journey is approximately three hours.

The temple where you will lodge tonight is staffed by monks who generally do not speak English. Accommodation is traditional and basic; single mattresses will be laid on traditional tatami mats, tatami mat floors are not hard and mattresses are designed for comfortable sleep. The doors to rooms are made from rice paper so noise will travel and cannot be locked and rooms are individually heated but hallways are not. There will be shared bathrooms with shower and toilet facilities.

The evening meal is a Buddhist vegetarian dinner, known as Shojin Ryori and is served promptly at 18:00. Your bedding in your room will be prepared by the monks whilst you are at dinner.

The evening is free for quiet reflection in your room, please note there are no TVs on the premises.

Meals included – Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Destination Information**

**Koya-San** – Known primarily as the centre of the Shingon sub-section of Buddhism, Koya-San sits in the mountains and is the ideal spot to take a glimpse of Japan's traditional religious life.

#### **DAY 11: KOYASAN – OSAKA**

Rise early this morning to join the monks in their daily morning prayers before a traditional breakfast. Take a walking tour of Koya-San visiting Kongobu-Ji and travel by chartered coach to visit Okunoin. Travel two and a half hours to Osaka this afternoon and check into your hotel for the next two nights.

Meals included – Breakfast

#### **Destination Information**

**Kongobu-Ji Temple** – Dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Kongobu-Ji Temple is the head temple of the Shingon Buddhist sect. The interior of the building is adorned with paintings of cranes and there are sliding doors throughout.

**Okunoin Cemetery** – home to Kobo Daishi's mausoleum (founder of Shingon Buddhism), Okunoin Cemetery is the largest cemetery in Japan, with over 200,000 tombstones, as many wished to be buried near Kobo Daishi.

**Osaka** - Japan's third largest city. What Osaka lacks in sightseeing locations, it makes up for with its flamboyance, fun loving people and amazing food.

#### **DAY 12: OSAKA**

Today, drive two hours to Himeji to visit the 17th century Himeji Castle. The castle is largely in its original condition, so please be mindful of your step when walking about the castle. You will have to remove your shoes before walking along some of the wooden floors and there are some steep wooden steps to reach certain areas. After the reopening in March 2015, Himeji Castle has welcomed a large number of visitors. As such, they now issue numbered tickets to enter the Main Keep to visitors in order to limit the number of people who can enter the Main Keep reducing congestion, waiting time, and to protect the cultural properties. Please note this means that there may be cases where some visitors are not allowed to enter the Main Keep. Continue on to a sake brewery to learn about the brewing process

and enjoy some tasters. Travel back to Osaka stopping at the bright lights of the Dotonbori district, enjoy some free time here before taking the coach back to the hotel.

Meals included – Breakfast

#### **Destination Information**

**Himeji** - The second largest city of Hyogo Prefecture after Kobe, with approximately half a million inhabitants. Most famous for its magnificent castle.

**Himeji Castle** - Widely considered as Japan's most magnificent castle for its imposing size and beauty. The well-preserved castle is both a national and world heritage listed treasure. Himeji Castle has never been destroyed by war, earthquake or fire and survives to this day as one of the country's twelve original castles.

**Sake Brewery** – Sake is the national alcohol of Japan; a tour of the brewery offers the chance to learn about the manufacturing processes from the 1950's to the present day.

**Dotonbori district** – Historically a theatre district and still a popular entertainment area today the Dotonbori district offer an eccentric and electric atmosphere.

#### **DAYS 13-14: FLY OSAKA TO AUSTRALIA**

Transfer one hour to the airport, according to the time of your international flight departure. Any time before your flight is at leisure.

## Trails of Japan Travel Information

### Visas

Passports must be valid for six months beyond the length of stay. Visas are not required for Australian passport holders for entry into Japan for stays of up to 90 days.

### Insurance

We strongly encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the originals.

### Eating in Japan

Japanese cuisine is delicious, colourful and healthy. Meals are usually served with a bowl of rice and a bowl of miso soup and consist usually of fish, pickled vegetables and meat. Japan's other main staple is noodles, most famous being Udon and Soba. Most meals (excluding drinks) as stated on the itinerary are included in our Immerse Yourself group tours. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Japan. Food is an important element of Japanese culture. It is a time for families and friends to come together and much of family life revolves around the dinner table. Most food is eaten with chopsticks so best get practicing as cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Breakfast will be buffet style. Lunches are mostly pre-set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is usually buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high quality Japanese and Western dishes. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. These are also pre-booked in advance prior to your arrival by your guides. This will provide greater flexibility and allow you to sample a broad range of local cuisines and dishes. All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available.

On some days where many sights are covered, dinner times may be early and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

## Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. In the Fuji Five Lakes area, hotels tend to be more traditional in style and culture. In this area, you may be asked to take your shoes off at the door and store them in a secure locker – this is very traditional Japanese culture.

Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between Australia and Japan. Please note that in Japan hotel rooms are renowned for being small and rooms booked for single use are usually smaller than a standard double or twin room, contain one small double bed (or one single bed), and are designed for one person to use. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Hotels in Japan often do not have porters and you will be required to carry your own luggage. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/local guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs. Please note double bed requests can be made at time of booking but cannot be guaranteed.

Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty please speak to your National Escort. Tea and coffee facilities are not always available in hotels in Japan, so bring your own supply of coffee and tea bags.

## Transport

**Coaches:** Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in Japan are extremely well maintained and are comparatively smooth with the rest of Asia.

*Please note that seatbelts are not compulsory by law in Japan and therefore the local people largely choose not to wear them. For this reason, some vehicles may not be fitted with seatbelts or they may be hidden underneath protective seat covers. It is recommended that where seatbelts are available customers must use them and remain seated at all times while the vehicle is moving. If you have any concerns, please notify your National Escort/Local Guides.*

**Trains:** Japan's transport system is well known for being efficient, clean and convenient. We like to make sure that you get the opportunity to travel with the locals, making use of the city's world-renowned bullet trains that will whizz you from city to city in no time. When taking the bullet train (Shinkansen) your main luggage will be transported separately due to limited space on the train. We recommend you pack a small overnight bag to take with you on the bullet train, which includes a change of clothes and other necessary items including any medication that is required.

**Air:** Pre-flight seat allocation is not available on international and internal flight sectors

## Developments in Japan

Japan is a developed country and as such matches the west in modernity and technological advances. Japan is an extremely safe country and takes great responsibility in maintaining high safety standards.

## Souvenirs



We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

### Group Size

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a National Escort. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of eight travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so. For groups with fewer than 10 travellers, departures will operate with local guides only.

### Tipping Policy

Although tipping in Japan is not customary, if you feel you have received an excellent service, please feel free to tip your guide at your discretion.

### Packing List and Climate

You will find a complete packing list and a helpful climate chart in the 'Suggested Packing List', which will be included in the pre-departure information link sent within your deposit documentation. Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com).

### Luggage

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each; a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

### Exchanging Cash

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money when travelling to cities outside of Tokyo. US Dollars and Australian Dollars can be exchanged at Narita Airport and in some hotels, provided the Australian currency is new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be very limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

### Personal Expenses & Optional Tours

You will need to take some extra money to cover meals, drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of AUD\$400 per person, per week should be sufficient; however for those that cannot resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

### Climbing Steps

Sightseeing at nearly all of the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is



the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries, who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

## Cultural Differences

Japanese society and culture is built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Japan more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Some examples of scenarios you may encounter include removing your shoes and hats when entering a temple or house (some restaurants as well). You may be supplied with slippers at some places, but please come prepared with plenty of spare socks, and shoes that are easy to take off for the fairly regular occasions when they must be removed. Your National Escort will advise you of some of these other customs at the beginning of your tour.

## Vaccinations and Your Health

We recommend that you contact either your GP or Travelvax (1300 360 164) for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Travelvax has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au).

## Before You Leave

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) as in the event of an emergency, Australian Consular assistance will be more readily available. You can also access the Australian Government's travel advisory service for up to date information about your destination on the same website.

## After your booking

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice with deposit documentation via email. This includes important information and links to access the visa application form and instructions sheet online (if applicable). Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately four weeks prior to departure.

**Updated: 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**