



JAPAN ITINERARY

DAY 1

27 Jun

Welcome to Tokyo!

Arrive in the vibrant city of Tokyo. Arrive on time for GEA Happy Hour and a welcome dinner for a chance to get to know your fellow travelers and soak in the excitement of what's to come. You'll settle into your accommodations in the heart of Tokyo, ready for the days ahead.

Stay: Asakusa, Tokyo

DAY 2

28 Jun

Exploring Asakusa and Beginning of Nature Retreat

Start your day with a visit to the Senso-ji Buddhist Temple, one of Tokyo's most iconic and oldest temples. Walk through the famous Thunder Gate and explore the vibrant streets surrounding the temple, rich in cultural history. Stroll through the charming Asakusa area, browsing local markets and enjoying the atmosphere. After a delicious sushi lunch, you'll head out of the city to Nagano prefecture, and stay near the Akasawa Forest, Japan's first designated natural recreation forest. This ancient outdoor location has been protected since the early Edo period (1603-1867) and is home to many Kiso cypress trees that are more than 300 years old. Embrace the natural beauty as you prepare to immerse yourself in a tranquil environment for the next two days.

Stay: Nature Center, Nagano

DAY 3

29 Jun

Wellness in the Woods and Forest Bathing, a Japanese Mindful Engagement Experience with the Forest

Spend the entire day reconnecting with nature. Participate in Shinrin-yoku (forest bathing), a Japanese practice that involves immersing yourself in the forest atmosphere to reduce stress and improve well-being. Engage in mindfulness and wellness lessons that promote a sense of calm and serenity. Surrounded by the peaceful beauty of the Akasawa forest, this is your chance to relax, rejuvenate, and learn the healing power of nature.

Stay: Nature Center, Nagano

DAY 5

30 Jun

Rural School Visit and Kyoto's Cultural Wonders

In the morning, visit a rural school, where you'll meet with local students and teachers to learn about Japan's rural education system. After this enriching experience, you'll leave for Kyoto, the cultural heart of Japan. Upon arrival, enjoy an evening walking tour of Kyoto's Kimono district, where you'll wander through the historic streets lined with traditional wooden houses. Dinner is on your own in the famous Gion district, full of enchanting possibilities for an authentic dinner experience.

Stay: Kyoto

DAY 7

1 Jul

Kyoto's Temples, Shrines, and Cultural Treasures

Spend the day exploring some of Kyoto's most famous temples and shrines, including the majestic Fushimi Inari-taisha, renowned for its thousands of red torii gates, Sanjūsangen-dō, known for its 1000 statues of Kannon, and the serene Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion). Later, visit the Kyoto City International Foundation to learn about the city's global outreach and education programs. End the day with an immersive Geisha Experience and peaceful tea ceremony.

Stay: Kyoto

DAY 8

2 Jul

Academic Exchange and Return to Tokyo

Begin the morning with a brief visit to the University of Kyoto, followed by a visit to the stunning Kyoto Imperial Palace. After our final lunch in Kyoto, take the Shinkansen (bullet train) back to Tokyo. Upon arrival, visit the Asakusa Shrine, another tranquil spot nestled near Senso-ji. In the evening, you have an option of experiencing Sumo wrestling in Asakusa, diving into one of Japan's most revered sports!

Stay: Asakusa, Tokyo

DAY 9

3 Jul

Tokyo's Modern Flair and Traditional Roots

Your day begins with a visit to a local public high school, where you'll gain insights into the education system. Afterward, make your way to Shibuya Crossing, the world's busiest pedestrian intersection, and enjoy a delicious Michelin Star ramen lunch at a local spot. The afternoon will be spent exploring Akihabara, known being the hub for electronics, anime, and otaku culture and Harajuku, known for its quirky fashion shops and vibrant street culture. End the evening with a fun-filled Karaoke night, a quintessential Japanese experience!

Stay: Asakusa, Tokyo

DAY 10

4 Jul

Kamakura History and Coastal Beauty

Take a day trip to Kamakura, a coastal town next to Tokyo, known for its rich history and spiritual landmarks. Visit the towering Great Buddha of Kamakura, an awe-inspiring bronze statue and enjoy traditional sweets. After exploring the Hasedera Temple Complex, you'll have a chance to visit a public elementary School, where you'll meet local students and educators. The day ends at the Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine, with a traditional Japanese dinner in an elegant setting.

Stay: Asakusa, Tokyo

DAY 11

5 Jul

Day Trip to Hakone and Mt. Fuji Views

Embark on a scenic journey to Hakone, a mountainous town famous for its hot springs and stunning views of Mt. Fuji. Enjoy tea at a traditional tea house, followed by a peaceful boat tour on Lake Ashi, where you'll be surrounded by lush landscapes and serene waters. End your day at an optional onsen (hot spring), soaking in the mineral-rich waters as you take in the breathtaking mountain scenery. Return to Tokyo.

Stay: Asakusa, Tokyo

DAY 12

6 Jul

Farewell to Japan

As your journey comes to an end, share a final breakfast with your group in Tokyo. Say goodbye to your fellow travelers, or, if enough participants are continuing, prepare for the next leg of your adventure in Seoul, South Korea.