

**Sakura - Japan Blossoms\***  
**9 days - 8 nights**  
**Tokyo, Mt Fuji, Hakone, Osaka**  
**Discovery, Culture, History**

**This program may be operated for individuals or for groups**  
**This is a suggested itinerary – Please call us to customize**

*\*Cherry blossom's expected blooming date is from the mid-March to mid-April*

*Cherry (Japanese sakura) is a deciduous tree of the family Rosaceae. The color of the flowers varies according to the species, ranging from white to dark red through all the nuances of the pale pink. Even if it is not official, the cherry tree is with chrysanthemum the emblematic flower of Japan. There are more than 600 varieties of cherry trees in the Archipelago, including the original species and different crosses. Introduced in Japan in the middle of the Edo era before spreading throughout the country from the Meiji era, the Somei Yoshino, with five-colored flowers in pale pink, is today the most popular variety. popular. Through the tradition of the Heian era, the word flower has become synonymous with cherry tree and, among all the species that hatch in the spring, cherry blossoms have a very special meaning.*

**Day 1: Tokyo**

Your driver will meet you in the arrival hall at Narita Airport, to assist you with the transfer to your hotel (60 – 90 minutes). The remainder of the day is at your leisure.

**Day 2: Tokyo**

This morning, visit Asakusa Temple, Nakamise shopping street, Sumida River Sakura spot, Ginza shopping district, Imperial Palace and Meiji Jingu Shrine. The rest of the day and evening will be dedicated to the cherry blossoms. You can see them all over the city. From a few trees grouped near a station to larger plots, it all depends on how you want to enjoy it. For a typical photo, take a stroll in the garden of Chidorigafuchi near the Imperial Palace. The boats sailing on water littered with petals are a classic. Nakameguro offers a beautiful landscape all day long with its canal lined with cherry blossoms and lanterns, while people drink champagne on the terrace cafes that line the road. In the evening, the trees are illuminated and the whole area is at the party with food stands. Koishikawa Korakuen Garden offers a traditional Japanese garden with beautiful blooming cherry trees offering the opportunity to take great photos. Families will picnic at Asukayama Park and Showa Memorial Park where the vast spaces are perfect for relaxing and entertaining. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in Tokyo [B/D]

**Day 3: Tokyo (Mt Fuji, Hakone)**

During the Golden Week, Mt. Fuji is stormed by locals and tourist To avoid the crowds and enjoy the magic of the place, we'll leave early morning to visit the park! On the occasion of Fuji Shibazakura Matsuri, Mount Fuji is adorned with a sumptuous pink coat. With nearly 800,000 shibazakura - Japanese name of the phlox mousse, variety "lawn" cherry - this flower festival is the largest of its kind near the capital. Red, pink, purple and white bands crisscross Ryujin Ike pond, three kilometers south of Motosuko Lake in the Five Lakes area. A festival in Japan would not be complete without the local culinary specialties that accompany it. We'll enjoy the "Mount Fuji Delicious Food Festival" to discover the essential recipes of the region, often revisited for the occasion with shibazakura sauce: Fujinomiya yakisoba (fried noodles), Fujiyama taiyaki (fish-shaped cake) stuffed with red bean paste). After lunch we continue to Hakone, another cherry blossoms paradise to take a cruise on Lake Ashi Cruise and try the Hakone Ropeway. Overnight in Tokyo [B/L]

**Day 4: Tokyo, Osaka**

Morning free in Tokyo for shopping and relaxing. In the afternoon transfer to the train station for your trip to Osaka. The Shinkansen bullet train will take about 3 hours to reach Osaka. There, you'll meet by

our representative and driven to your hotel for check-in. Relax and enjoy dinner at your hotel. Overnight in Osaka [B/D]

*Japan's third biggest city, what Osaka lacks in sightseeing draw cards it makes up for with its flamboyance, fun loving people, and amazing food. Known as 'Japan's kitchen', take a walk down Dotonbori, a former pleasure district turned restaurant mecca where amongst other things you can sample fugu (poisonous puffer fish) and takoyaki (octopus' balls). Historically the commercial capital of Japan with a population of 2.6 million, Osaka is Japan's third largest metropolis and second most important business city and it has been the economic powerhouse of the Kansai region for centuries. Osaka first gained prominence when a powerful warlord built the country's most magnificent castle in the 16th century. To develop resources for his castle town, the ruler persuaded merchants from other parts of the nation to resettle in Osaka and it became an important distribution center. As the merchant class prospered, the town grew and traditional arts, such as kabuki and bunraku flourished. With the legacy of the city's commercial beginnings still intact, Osaka is renowned as an international business center. It is also famous for its local cuisine, the castle, bustling port, aquarium, underground shopping arcades, the oldest state temple in Japan and its popular Universal Studios attraction.*

### Day 5: Osaka

This morning we head to the district of Shin-Umeda in the north of the city, to visit Osaka's inevitable spot the Umeda Sky Building, designed by the architect Hiroshi Hara and whose construction was completed in March 1993. This huge building, with a very particular design, is 568 feet high and consists of two twin towers of 40 floors, connected by a magnificent circular observatory on the top floor. We stop first at the "Floating Garden Observatory", which allows you to observe the city behind huge windows. Climbing a few steps, we find ourselves outside on the "Lumi Sky Walk" which traces a phosphorescent milky way on the ground. The 360-degree views of Osaka are absolutely sublime, especially at nightfall. Your guide will take you to explore Osaka Castle, one of the most famous sites, taking the time to enjoy the unique architecture and richness of the castle's exhibits. The castle itself is one of the best places to observe the cherry blossoms. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before hopping aboard your boat for a cruise around the nearby town of Nakanoshima Island to discover the most beautiful sites of Osaka during this 4-hours river cruise. Return to your hotel for and overnight in Osaka. [B/L]

### Day 6: Osaka (Blossoms)

Today will be dedicated to a blossom tour. We start at Hattori-Ryokuchi kôen renowned for its arboretum (botanical garden) with hundreds of species of herbs and flowers including 700 kinds of camellias. The atmosphere is more than relaxing. Stroll as well along the "Flowers Street", 500 feet of colors and scents that change with the seasons: Daffodils, violets and much more and of course an excellent spot to admire the sakura in the spring! We continue to Banpaku Park, known for its sun tour, and also one of the top 100 places for hanami, listed by the Japan Cherry Blossom Association, Sakura No Kai. During the sakura season, people come to admire the 5,500 cherry blossoms in the park. This is the perfect place to have lunch under the cherry blossoms! Continue to Shi-Tennoji Temple, the oldest temple in Japan, built in 593 by Prince Shôtoku-taishi (574-622). Gokurakujdo no niwa, garden of paradise, adjacent to Shi-tennoji temple, has about fifty cherry trees. Finally



continue to the Mint Museum, which garden has a large cherry alley. On over 2,000 feet, 350 cherry trees from 130 different species, follow one another. A hundred late cherry trees, yae-zakura, can be admired. Return to your hotel for overnight. [B/L]

### Day 7: Osaka, USA

You may have some free time this morning depending on your flight schedule. Please note that your transfer to Kansai airport will be 5 to 6 hours in advance of your departure time. [B]

B] = Breakfast | [B/L] = Breakfast and Lunch | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner

#### Your Tour includes:

- Arrival and departure transfers
- 6 nights' accommodation
  - Tokyo – 3 nights
  - Kyoto – 3 nights
- Meals
  - Breakfast daily
  - 4 lunches
  - 3 dinners
- Full-day tour of Tokyo
  - Sumida River cruise
  - Sensoji Temple
  - Ginza District
- Full-day tour of Hakone/Mt. Fuji
  - Lake Ashi
  - Komagatake Ropeway
- Visit of Osaka
  - Umeda Sky Building
  - Osaka Castle
  - River cruise
- Hattori-Ryokuchi kôen Botanical Garden
- Banpaku Park
- Shi-Tennoji temple
- Mint Museum
- Train ticket Tokyo – Osaka in 2nd or 1<sup>st</sup> class with reserved seat
- Entrance fees

#### Tour does not include:

- International airfare, taxes and fees
- Meals or drinks other than specified as included
- Japan Visa processing and issuing visa fee
- Travel Insurance
- Expenses of a personal nature (minibar, phone call, laundry, etc.),
- Tips to guides/drivers/porters, etc.
- Entrance fees for any extra sightseeing
- Optional activities

#### Recommended Hotels in your tour:

City	Hotel Name	Tripadvisor
<b>First Class</b>		
Tokyo	Shiba Park	4
Osaka	Tokyu Rei Osaka	4.5
<b>Deluxe</b>		
Tokyo	Grand Hyatt	4.5
Osaka	New Otani Osaka	4.5

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

#### Tour Prices:

These programs can be customized for individuals and groups.

Changes to this program may be requested by phone (1855-55-TOURS) or using the web FIT Quote Request

#### • Airfare

We also be glad to add the necessary airfare from your gateway so you take advantage of our special discounted leisure fares

#### • Program

You may add or remove;

- Trip days
- Cities and sites

- Meals
- **Other options**
  - The program was designed with private services, however, we may substitute shared sightseeing where available
  - If you prefer deluxe services we may operate this program including private driver, private guide and concierge service.
- **Quotation**

Once we have designed the program the way you want we'll give you a quote within 2 business days.

**Tour Code:** JP06TYO20TE

**Options:**

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for individuals, families and groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.

**Group Quotations**

- If you wish to use these programs for your group or as the basis for a customized journey please either call us (1-855-55-TOURS or use the web Group Quote Request.
- In either case our specialists will work with to refine all the details and they will get you a quote with 2 business days. Quotes may be obtained for the air and land portions of just for the land journey.
- Booking both air and land with us will represent savings for you because of our buying power and longtime relationship with the airlines.
- We will also may have the choice between regular fares and special leisure fares not available to the public.