

**Tôkaidô - The Golden Route  
9 days – 8 nights  
Tokyo, Hakone, Mt Fuji, Kyoto, Nara, Fushimi  
Discovery, Culture, History**

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

*In fact, the road of Tôkaidô, linking Tokyo and Kyoto, has been borrowed for hundreds of years! So how far are they from each other, and most importantly, what are the most convenient ways to connect them? Between the 5th and the 9th century the first unified state of Japan was created. The Tôkaidô was one of the constituent regions of the region, and today it represents the Kanto and Kansai regions. During the intensification of the exchanges at the time of Kamakura (1185-1333), this name will also refer to the coastal road taken by the merchants, the daimyo and other characters to connect the cities of Edo, the city of the chief supreme military (today Tokyo) and Kyoto, the city of the emperor.*

### **Day 1: Arrive Tokyo**

After passing formalities at Narita Airport, you will be met by your driver in the arrival hall who will assist you with the private transfer to your hotel (60 – 90 minutes). The remainder of your day is free to rest and relax or to start the discovery of this fascinating city. Overnight in Tokyo.

*One of the World's most cutting-edge capitals, Tokyo is a city of contrasts. Famous for its cutting-edge modernity, neon-lit landscape and towering skyscrapers, it is also home to sprawling parkland, peaceful shrines and temples and lovingly tended gardens. Despite its love affair with manga pop culture, fashion, high-tech trends and conspicuous consumption, below the surface it's a city that has its roots in an ancient heritage. Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples stand close to skyscrapers as a reminder of a more contemplative time and at the heart of the hyperactive center lies the serene Imperial Palace, the home of the ruling emperor that provides a tangible link to the city's historical past. Behind the shopping, entertainment and commercial emporia can be found quaint wooden houses, private gardens with meticulously clipped bonsai trees and the Zen-like calm of the Hamarikyû Gardens. The city's reputation as a mega-expensive metropolis is ill conceived and visitors can take advantage of inexpensive Izakaya bars and neighborhood cafes that serve delicious noodles and rice dishes.*

### **Option [1] - Dinner at Gonpachi**

*Enjoy a multi course Japanese dinner at the famous Izakaya-style restaurant Gonpachi, whose amazing interior was the inspiration for the set of Tarantino's Kill Bill movie starring Uma Thurman. Tarantino had dinner at the restaurant and was so taken by the interesting architecture that he decided to make this the backdrop for the scene "Showdown at The House of the Blue Leaves" in Kill Bill. Gonpachi serves tasty home-style Japanese food. Inclusive of set course dinner and 2 hours free flow drinks (beer, wine, sake, soft drinks). Price for "dietary requirements" is for a menu specially made for example Vegetarian or travelers with food allergies. Please let us know at the time of booking. Transfers to and from the restaurant are not included. Please make your own way.*

### **Day 2: Tokyo**

For today we have arranged a private car and local guide to take you on a day tour of this fascinating city. The day begins with a visit to Meiji Shrine, dedicated to the deified spirit of Emperor Meiji and a popular place for traditional Japanese weddings. Take a walk down Omotesando shopping street, a broad tree-lined avenue and home to the flagship stores of the world's top fashion brands. Then, head across town to Asakusa, Tokyo's old town, where you can soak in the atmosphere of the Tokyo of old. Visit Sensoji, Tokyo's oldest temple and wander down Nakamise, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional, local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries.

Take a boat cruise on the Sumida River passing under 12 bridges. Disembark at Edo Period Japanese garden Hamarikyu, surrounded by the Shiodome district's futuristic skyscrapers, a great example of how Japan is the land of contrasts. Stop for a cup of steaming matcha (Japanese tea) and Japanese sweets in a tea house on a small island in the park's lake. Overnight in Tokyo. [B]

### Day 3: Tokyo

The world's largest fish market, Tsukiji Market handles about 2,900 tons of marine products a day, worth about 3 billion yen (\$28 million). Some 450 kinds of fish are received; from penny-per-piece sardines to golden brown dried sea slug caviar, a bargain at \$500 a pound. Some of the giant tuna go for well over 1,000,000 yen each (\$8,000). Take time to wander through this enormous market, exploring both the vegetable and fruit areas plus the impressive seafood section. There may also be an opportunity to see a complete tuna being cut and filleted. You will then visit a typical Japanese home. Your guide will answer all your questions about Japanese culture and everyday life in Tokyo during the transfer by public transportation. Learn to prepare maki sushi (rolled sushi), gunkan maki (sushi rice wrapped with a strip of seaweed and topped with soft ingredients), and nigiri sushi (sushi rice topped with a slice of raw fish). Then enjoy your home-made sushi for lunch. The afternoon is at leisure. Transfers from-to the hotel and between locations will be operated by private car. Overnight in Tokyo. [B/L]

### Day 4: Tokyo, Hakone, Mt Fuji National Park

Explore the Fuji/Hakone National Park, located only 90 minutes from Tokyo, by private car with guide.

*Hakone is a natural nature wonderland and is famous for its hot springs, outdoor pursuits and the view of the nearby Mount Fuji. It is part of the Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, about 62 miles from Tokyo, thereby providing a popular weekend destination for city residents keen to escape the frenzy of the capital. Beautiful Hakone has about everything a vacationer could wish for. Besides the towering mountains, lakes and views of Mount Fuji, it is also blessed with interesting historical sites. A majestic replica of a pirate ship will sweep you across the Lake Ashinoko, a lake formed by a volcanic eruption 3000 years ago. Hakone used to be an important checkpoint to control traffic along the Tokaido highway, which linked Tokyo with Kyoto during the feudal Edo Period.*

Visit the Hakone Checkpoint to see the gates, fence, housing for officers and foot soldiers, a prison chamber and a lookout tower. Last stop of the day is the Hakone Open Air Museum, which successfully attempts to create a harmonic balance of nature and art by exhibiting various sculptures on its spacious grounds in combination with beautiful views of the surrounding valley and mountains. Besides the sculptures, the Hakone Open Air Museum features various indoor galleries, including a sizable Picasso Collection, consisting of paintings, prints, sculptures and ceramic creations. You can also relax your tired feet with a soak in the hot spring footbath! Throughout the day you will have the chance to get a glimpse of Mt Fuji, however please keep in mind that she is a notoriously shy mountain and it needs to be a clear day. Tonight, you will stay in a Japanese traditional ryokan, sleeping on futons laid out on tatami mats and tasting delicious meals and piping hot onsen (hot spring) baths. Overnight in Hakone. [B/D]

### Day 5: Hakone, Kyoto

Today you will be transferred privately to the station to ride Japan's world-famous Shinkansen bullet train to Kyoto. Capable of speeds of up to 185mph (360km/h), the Shinkansen takes 2 hours to reach Kyoto. You will then be transferred to your hotel.

*This is a must-see destination in Japan. Kyoto is the nation's former capital and was the residence of the emperor from 794 until 1868. It is Japan's seventh largest metropolis with a population of around 1.4 million and a city of culture that offers a plethora of temples, shrines and other historically priceless structures that still survive today. With 2,000 religious buildings, including 1,600 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines, as well as palaces, gardens and associated architecture, it is one of the best preserved cities in Japan and has been awarded UNESCO's World Heritage status. Kyoto*

*represents the "Japan of old" and beyond the high-rise skyscrapers built as a monument to progress, the real monument to Japan's historical and cultural past can be found in the city's narrow alleyways where teahouses abound and kimono-clad geisha hurry from elegant function to elegant function. This is a place to go back in time to Japan's mysterious past where echoes of the court nobility resonate at the Imperial Palace and the search for contemplation can be found in Ryoanji's Zen rock gardens.*

This afternoon you will have the opportunity to experience Japanese culture hands-on with a lesson of Japanese Cooking in Machiya Townhouse. Japanese cuisine has such high reputation that it was declared UNESCO Intangible World Heritage. In this tour you will try your hand at making some of the dishes that made this cuisine so popular in the world and in particular learn about Kyoto's typical kappo cuisine. In Japanese, "kappo" means to cut ingredients with a knife and cook them over a fire. At a kappo style restaurant, fine seasonal cuisine is served over a counter where you sit face to face with a chef. In this class you will be the chef! Return to the hotel for overnight. [B/D]

### Day 6: Kyoto

Today you explore the former imperial capital by private car with a knowledgeable local guide to visit some of Kyoto's World Heritage Sites. You will start your day with a visit to Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), which was originally built as a retirement villa for the Shogun. After his death it became a Buddhist Temple at his request, and is now one of Kyoto's most famous temples. Nijo Castle is an ornamental castle built by the founder of the Edo Shogunate as his Kyoto residence and is beautified by stunning surrounding gardens. The main building was completed in 1603, and is famous for its architecture, decorated sliding doors and 'chirping' nightingale floors. Take a walk down to Nijo Castle, a narrow, five-block long shopping street lined by more than one hundred shops and restaurants. Known as "Kyoto's Kitchen", this lively retail market specializes in all things food related, like fresh seafood, produce, knives and cookware, and is a great place to find seasonal foods and Kyoto specialties, such as Japanese sweets, pickles, dried seafood and sushi. The final stop today is Kiyomizu (Pure Water) Temple. From the 43-foot high veranda jutting out from the Main Hall you can enjoy amazing views of the whole of Kyoto, whilst pondering the fact that both the Main Hall and Veranda were built without the use of nails or any kind of joiners. Return to the hotel for overnight. [B]

### Option [2] - Lunch at Itoh Dining

*Stop for a multi course lunch at the distinctive Japanese restaurant Itoh Dining, where you can enjoy the famous Kobe beef and other traditional examples of Japanese cuisine. Includes a set menu lunch and 1 glass of beer or wine per person.*

### Day 7: Kyoto (Nara)

Transfer from your hotel to Nara by car (45 min) with a local guide. For 74 years during the 8th century Nara was Japan's capital and many of the temples and shrines built at that time still remain. Visit the Todaiji Temple, the world's largest wooden building and home to Japan's largest Buddha. Next stop is Nara's most celebrated shrine, Kasuga Taisha, established in 768 AD and famous for its hundreds of bronze and stone lanterns which have been donated by worshipers. Take a walk through Nara Park, called Deer park by locals due to the large population of more than 1,000 tame deer living there. On the way back



from Nara, visit Fushimi Inari Shrine, which was used in the movie “Memoirs of a Geisha”. It is home to over 10,000 red torii gates, which form a path up the mountain behind the temple. Overnight in Kyoto. [B]

### Day 8: Kyoto, Tokyo

Today, make the return trip to Tokyo (2.5 hours) at any time you want, so you can either spend your day sightseeing in Kyoto, or head back early to see more of Tokyo (please inform us at the time of booking). Private transfers between the hotel and station in both cities are included. Overnight in Tokyo. [B]

### Day 9: Tokyo, USA

Your day is free until your private transfer to Narita or Haneda Airport (60-90 minutes) to board your flight back home. [B]

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

### Your Tour includes:

- Private airport transfers
- Assistance by our representatives
- 8 nights’ accommodation
  - Tokyo 4 nights
  - Hakone 1 night
  - Kyoto 3 nights
- Meals
  - Daily breakfast
  - 1 lunch
  - 1 dinner
- Tokyo day tour
  - Tsukiji Fish Market Walk and Sushi making
  - Japanese Cooking in Machiya Townhouse
- Hakone Open Air Museum
- Kyoto Tour
  - Kinkakuji Temple
  - Kyoto Nijo Castle
  - Nijo Castle
  - Kiyomizu (Pure Water) Temple

- Nara and Fushimi day tour
  - Todaiji Temple
  - Kasuga Taisha Shrine
  - Fushimi Inari Shrine
- All sightseeing and touring by private car
- English-speaking local guides as specified
- Entrance fees for specified tours
- All train tickets including reserved seats in Green (first) class

### 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	Villa Fontaine Shiodome	4
Hakone	Yutorelo An Ryokan	3.5
Kyoto	Vista Premio Kyoto	4
<b>Deluxe</b>		
Tokyo	Park Hotel	4.5
Hakone	Tenryu Ryokan	3.5
Kyoto	Kyoto Tokyu	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:** JP01TYO20TE

**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.