

Cherry Blossom Japan

Duration : 17 Days / Nights

Price From : NZ\$21,730



Each spring, Japan's landscape is host to fragile pink and white sakura blooming; stunning colour that is celebrated throughout the entire country. Start this journey in bustling Tokyo and see its impressive gardens, go in search of the famous 'snow monkeys' and the alpine 'old town' of Takayama. On to cultural Kyoto and poignant Hiroshima, ending with spectacular views of Mt Fuji from the top of Mt Owakudani. This unique and incredibly scenic country with enchanting culture, wonderful cuisine and gracious people awaits you.

On this journey you will enjoy the following special experiences

- Enjoy the ultimate sushi-lovers experience in Tokyo – a sushi master will guide us through making sushi rolls and nigiri which we will then enjoy for lunch
- Visit steaming hot springs to see monkeys bathing – visit Yudanaka Onsen to see wild snow monkeys relaxing in the steaming hot springs surrounded by thick forest
- Tour the historic villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama – set in a mountainous region that was cut off from the rest of the world for a long period of time, these villages with their Gassho-style houses subsisted on the cultivation of mulberry trees and the rearing of silkworms. On this tour you'll see the large houses with their steeply pitched thatched roofs, the only examples of their kind in Japan.

Welcome Back Offer

If you have travelled a World Journeys Hosted Journey before, we would like to welcome you back with a saving of

\$400 per couple (or \$200 per person) if you book this Cherry Blossom Japan journey.

Itinerary

March 2025

Wed 26: Auckland > Tokyo

Morning flight to Tokyo. On arrival we will be transferred to our hotel for an evening at leisure.

Thu 27: Tokyo

Full day tour of Tokyo where you will visit the Tsukiji Outer Fish Market, then visit a restaurant to learn how to make sushi from a local chef. Visit Ginza Mitsukoshi, the oldest surviving department store in Tokyo. See the Imperial Palace Plaza, Hamarikyū Garden and Ueno Park, a popular spot for cherry blossom parties with more than 1000 cherry trees lining the streets. Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening.

Fri 28: Tokyo

Another full day tour of Tokyo visiting Meiji Shrine, Tokyo's most famous Shinto shrine which is wonderfully serene and austere. Visit Tokyo Tower, Omotesando Street, Asakusa Kannon Temple, Akihabara Electronic Town and drive by the famous intersection of Shibuya, the bustling shopping district. Lunch is included at a local restaurant.

Sat 29: Tokyo > Yudanaka

This morning depart for Nagano by bullet train and then travel by train to Yudanaka, the spa town. Here we visit the Jigokudani Monkey Park where we hope to see 'snow monkeys' bathing in the steaming natural onsen pools. Check in to your ryokan complete with indoor and outdoor onsens (spas). Enjoy a traditional Japanese dinner at your accommodation.

Sun 30: Yudanaka > Takayama

Continue to the historical town of Takayama, set in the heart of the Japanese Alps, visiting the Zenkoji Temple, a wasabi farm and Matsumoto Castle en route. This town is beautifully preserved with many buildings dating from the Edo period, when the city thrived as a wealthy town of merchants. They provide a glimpse into the former living quarters of the merchants and exhibit traditional household goods and local arts and crafts. Dinner at the hotel this evening.

Mon 31: Takayama > Shirakawa-Go > Gokayama > Kanazawa

Visit the morning markets and the former government house of Takayama. See the Shirakawago UNESCO World Heritage Listed site, famous for its traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses, with their steeply pitched thatched roofs, some of which are more than 250 years old. Visit the Japanese Paper Village of Gokayama. Finish in Kanazawa a pristine castle town with an array of cultural attractions.

April 2025

Tue 1: Kanazawa > Kyoto

Visit Kenrokuen garden, one of Japan's most beautiful gardens. In spring, visitors can see plum and cherry blossoms. We also visit the Samurai House, Gold Museum and Ohmi-cho Market. Then we travel a little over two hours by train to Kyoto.

Wed 2: Kyoto

Kyoto is Japan's cultural heart, known for its Buddhist temples, beautiful gardens and colourful shrines. Enjoy a full day tour to see the Kinkakuji Temple and Ryoanji Temple, ending with Kiyomizu Temple, perched on a hill overlooking the Kyoto basin and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Thu 3: Kyoto

Visit Nijo Castle then Arashiyama for a visit to the Sagano Bamboo Grove with thick green bamboo stalks which seem to continue endlessly in every direction. See the 'Moon Crossing Bridge' a central landmark famous for its cherry blossom viewing. Finish with a visit to Tenryuji Temple. Afternoon at leisure.

Fri 4: Kyoto > Nara > Osaka

Touring today includes Nara en route to Osaka. Visits include Todaiji Temple, Nara Park and the Kasuga Shrine, with great views from Osaka Castle.

Sat 5: Osaka

Enjoy a half day tour of Osaka including the Kaiyukan Aquarium. See Umeda, the commercial and business district, with its prominent skyscrapers. Enjoy time at leisure.

Sun 6: Osaka > Hiroshima

We drive to Kobe to visit a sake brewery then have lunch at a Teppanyaki restaurant. In the afternoon take the bullet train to Hiroshima.

Mon 7: Hiroshima & Miyajima

Hiroshima has rebuilt itself as one of Japan's most laid back yet vibrant cities full of wide boulevards and art museums, great food and friendly, welcoming people. Visit the Peace Memorial and Museum, A-Bomb Dome and take a short ferry ride out to Miyajima Island, a small wooded island located in the Inland Sea. Here you will find the famous, floating Torii Gate, a shrine known worldwide for being built over water, seemingly floating in the sea.

Tue 8: Hiroshima > Hakone

Take the bullet train to Hakone via Nagoya. Visit the Ichiku Kubota Museum and scenic Lake Kawaguchi before transferring to our hotel. Some great views of Mt Fuji today weather permitting.

Wed 9: Hakone > Tokyo

Ride the cable car up Mt Owakudani, passing over sulphurous vents and hot springs. In this volcanic area, you can eat a hard-boiled egg from the sulphuric hot springs, adding seven years to your life! From the top, if it's a clear day, we will see stunning views of Mt Fuji, Japan's highest and most worshipped mountain, and Lake Ashi. We end with a cruise on Lake Ashi then continue to the amazing Hakone Open Air Sculpture Museum. Arrive in Tokyo late afternoon and enjoy a farewell dinner.

Thu 10: Tokyo > Auckland

Morning at leisure before we transfer to the airport for our overnight flight to Auckland.

Fri 11: Auckland

Morning arrival in Auckland.

Map



Included

- Small group tour (18 max)
- Economy class airfares ex Auckland
- A World Journeys host
- Accommodation in 4-star hotels
- Transfers, sightseeing and entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Train journeys as per the itinerary
- Airline taxes
- Meals as indicated

Not Included

- Items of a personal nature
- Travel insurance (mandatory)
- Visas (if applicable)
- Airfare upgrades to Premium Economy or Business Class are available at additional cost, subject to availability
- Optional activities



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