



Osaka, Kyoto & Tokyo



OSAKA

Famous for its down-to-earth citizens and hearty cuisine, Osaka combines historical and cultural attractions with all the delights of a Japanese urban phenomenon. At night Osaka is live-wired with flashing neon, beckoning with promises of tako-yaki (fried octopus ball) & good times.

KYOTO

Kyoto, with its hundreds of temples and gardens, was the imperial capital between 794 and 1868, and remains the cultural centre of Japan. Its raked pebble gardens, sensuously contoured temple roofs and mysterious Shintō shrines fulfil the Japanese fantasy of every Western cliché hunter.

TOKYO

The sheer level of energy is the most striking aspect of Japan's capital city. Tokyo is a place where the urgent rhythms of consumer culture collide with the quieter moments that linger from older traditions. It's hectic madness leavened by the most Zen of calms.



9 Days

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Osaka castle visit
- Sky Building Observatory
- Okonomiyaki dinner
- Kimono Show
- Visit Fushimi Inari Taishya
- Visit Sanjusangen-do
- Lake Ashi Cruise
- Mount Komagateke
- Senjoji Temple visit
- Imperial Palace East Garden
- Meiji Shrine
- Visit Tokyo Tower

INCLUDED

- Return Flights
- Tour Director
- Football Coordinator
- City sightseeing tours
- Licensed local guides
- Hotel accommodation
- Breakfast & dinner daily
- Private motor coach
- Bullet Train
- Entrance fees
- 2 Rugby games
- 1 Rugby practice
- Awards dinner

Day 1 > Start Tour

Day 2 > Konichiwa Osaka

Meet your Tour Director and check into hotel

Day 3 > Osaka guided sightseeing tour

Osaka's 16th-century castle dominates the city, both economically (it's the single most visited sight in Japan) and architecturally. Extensively renovated in 1997, the castle maintains the city's historic past even as space-age buildings like the Kaiyukan Aquarium move Osaka into the future. The building stretches out its wings like a resting butterfly, and its tanks display fish and other marine life from a large variety of environments. A large central tank captures the life of the Pacific, from whale sharks to manta rays to spider crabs. Come up for air at the Umeda Sky Building, where you'll climb 550 feet to the Floating Garden Observatory for a bird's eye view of Osaka.

Osaka castle visit
Umeda Sky Building Observatory
Okonomiyaki dinner

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY GAME ONE

Day 4 > Kyoto Kinkakuji Temple visit

Kimono Show
Visit Fushimi Inari Taishya
Visit Sanjusangen-do

Day 5 > Kyoto - Tokyo

Travel to Tokyo via Shinkansen Bullet Train Jump on the fastest train in the world and zip to Kyoto. The Shinkansen "bullet" train, inaugurated in 1964 and continually improved ever since, can travel up to 200 miles per hour. The newest versions use aviation technology to decrease wind resistance and noise, ensuring a safe, comfortable -- and fast! -- ride.

RUGBY PRACTICE

Day 6 > Tokyo Landmarks

Tokyo guided sightseeing tour Jangling neon and tranquil temples, radical fashion choices and quietly practiced traditions. Japan's sprawling, chaotic capital combines cutting-edge technology with an age-old culture, generating a directed energy and graceful drive unique to Tokyo. See what some of the buzz is about with a local licensed guide. Start with a whiff of the miraculous at the Senso Temple, where sacred incense smoke is said to have curative powers, before moving onto the Imperial Palace. The complex houses the emperor and his family and is therefore closed to the public, but much of the surrounding gardens and museums provide a glimpse into the imperial history of Japan (as well as some of its pop history -- in the martial arts hall in the palace's park, a 1966 concert brought in The Beatles). Built to commemorate Emperor Meiji and his empress, the Meiji Shrine is one of the most important Shinto shrines in the country. Yearly festivals bring various groups to its iris garden and Treasure House, including the "Seven-Five-Three Festival," in which young children arrive dressed in mini kimonos.

Day 7 > Game Day

INTERNATIONAL RUGBY GAME TWO

Day 8 > Hakone excursion

Step into the misty beauty of a traditional Japanese watercolor. Peaceful lakes, stunning gardens, and magnificent views of Mount Fuji make Hakone one of the prettiest destinations for city-weary Tokyoites. Watch how far you travel, though -- Hakone was once the feudal checkpoint for visitors to the capital, with all guns required to stay outside the borders and all women required to stay in.

Day 9 > Fly Home