

GEMS OF JAPAN & TREASURES OF SOUTH KOREA

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VISITING: TOKYO, NIKKO, MOUNT FUJI, KYOTO, NARA PARK, OSAKA, SEOUL, DAEGU, GYEONGJU, BUSAN, CHUNGJU

DAY 1 - MALTA - JAPAN

Meet the tour manager at Malta International Airport for your flight to Japan.

DAY 2 - TOKYO

Upon arrival you will be welcomed and transferred to your 4* Grand Pacific La Daiba.

Tokyo is Japan's capital and the country's largest city. Tokyo is also one of Japan's 47 prefectures, but is called a metropolis rather than a prefecture. The metropolis of Tokyo consists of 23 city wards, 26 cities, 5 towns and 8 villages, including the Izu and Ogasawara Islands, several small Pacific Islands in the south of Japan's main island Honshu. The 23 city wards are the center of Tokyo and make up about one third of the metropolis' area, while housing roughly eight of Tokyo's approximately twelve million residents. Prior to 1868, Tokyo was known as Edo. A small castle town in the 16th century, Edo became Japan's political center in 1603 when Tokugawa Ieyasu established his feudal government there. A few decades later, Edo had grown into one of the world's most populous cities. With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the emperor and capital were moved from Kyoto to Edo, which was renamed Tokyo ("Eastern Capital").

DAY 3 - TOKYO

Breakfast and proceed for full day city tour of Tokyo visiting the Meiji Jingu Shrine, drive through the Imperial Palace Plaza which comprises the moats and spacious plaza between the east side of the Imperial Palace and the Marunouchi office buildings. On either side of the road through the middle of the plaza stretches lawn with pine groves. On the north side of the plaza stands a fountain commemorating the marriage of the Emperor and Empress. To the south is a bronze of Kusunoki Masashige, a 14th-century samurai loyal to the emperor. Sensoji is the oldest and most impressive temple in Tokyo. The main hall was first built in 645 to house a tiny golden statue of Kannon, the goddess of mercy, that had been repeatedly hauled up in fishing nets despite being thrown back into the river. The statue was enshrined in the main hall where it ostensibly remains today -- a sight too holy to be seen. The temple was destroyed in the air raids of March 10, 1945, and the present building is a 1958 reconstruction. The temple precincts bustle with people praying, buying fortunes, shopping or sightseeing. Many come for the curative powers of smoke billowing from the bronze urn burning incense in front of the main hall. People rub smoke on joints in the hope of easing aches and pains.

Ginza is the Champs-Élysées of Tokyo. The street has always been fashionable and in the vanguard of change. Early in the Meiji Era gas lights and streetcars brought the area fame. In the Taisho Era "modern

boys" and "modern girls" came to Ginza to dance the Charleston. In the fascist age, young military officers strutted along the street in their high-peaked hats. World War II air raids destroyed the district-only the Hattori clock tower survived-but the area was completely rebuilt after the war and quickly regained its former preeminence. The Sony Building displays all of the company's latest products.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 4 - NIKKO

Breakfast and full day tour of Nikko. First visit will be The Toshogu Shrine which is the main attraction of Nikko. The Shinto shrine is dedicated to the kami (spirit) of Ieyasu who founded the Tokugawa Shogunate, a military dynasty that ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867.

To create a worthy shrine for the shogun, 15,000 craftsmen worked for two years, using 2.5 million sheets of gold leaf. The enshrinement of Ieyasu's spirit is reenacted twice each year in the Procession of the Thousand Warriors.

Unlike most Shinto shrines, characterized by minimalist architecture that blends into its surroundings, Toshogu is a riot of colour, gold, and carvings, with birds and flowers, dancing maidens, and sages following one another around the buildings. Some visitors find the shrine awe-inspiring and beautiful; others are repelled by the gaudiness. In contrast to the exuberance of the shrine, Ieyasu's mausoleum itself is relatively simple and austere.

One of the most famous elements of Toshogu is the Sacred Stable, where a white imperial horse is kept (a gift of New Zealand). The stable's fame derives from the original carving depicting the three wise monkeys, "Hear no evil, Speak no evil, See no evil." Other famous carvings at Toshogu include a sleeping cat and an odd rendering of an elephant by an artist who had apparently never seen one.

Drive to Kegon Waterfall the almost 100 meter tall most famous of Nikko's many beautiful waterfalls. In fact, it is even ranked as one of Japan's three most beautiful falls, along with Nachi Waterfall in Wakayama Prefecture and Fukuroda Waterfall in Ibaraki Prefecture. Kegon Waterfall is also a popular autumn color spot. The trees around the waterfall are usually most colorful from mid to late October. In the winter, the waterfall is impressive as well, when it freezes almost completely solid. Later drive through Chuzen-ji Lake.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 5 - TOKYO - KYOTO

Breakfast and full day tour of Tokyo visiting Mt. Fuji, Lake Kawaguchi, Kubota Ichiku Art Museum, Ooishi Park, Mt. Tenjo Park & Mt. Kachikachi Ropeway and the Springs of Mt. Fuji (museum included). Mount Fuji is the highest and most popular mountain in Japan, and is considered to be one of the most beautiful conical

volcanoes in the world. The base of Mt. Fuji, which forms an almost perfect circle, stretches 35 to 40 km from east to west and the same distance from north to south. The volcano has not been active for more than 250 years, but apparently there was a time when smoke rising from its crater was a familiar feature of the landscape. After lunch transfer to Mishima train station for transfer to Kyoto. Check in at the 4* New Miyako Hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch.

DAY 6 - KYOTO

After breakfast depart for full day tour of Kyoto visiting all main attractions. We start with Nijo Castle, built by Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate, in 1603, is a World Heritage Site and its Ninomaru Palace is designated a National Treasure on account of its splendid architecture and magnificent interior decoration. Ieyasu built the castle as his Kyoto residence, but its greater significance was as a symbol of Tokugawa power in the Kansai region. The palace is an example of "shoin-zukuri" style, its four building groups staggered so that as many rooms as possible could front a garden or court. The interior is decorated with wall paintings by the Kano school. The floorboards of corridors creak underfoot. Called "bush warbler boards," they warned of the approach of an assassin.

After drive to Kinkakuji the Temple of the Golden Pavilion which is a famous structure dating from the Muromachi Period and was listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1994. It is the popular name of Rokuon-ji (Deer Park Temple), a temple dedicated to the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy. Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), the third of the Ashikaga Shoguns, built a retirement estate there in 1398. After his death the grounds were turned into a Buddhist temple for the Rinzaï sect. The only building to remain standing of Yoshimitsu's estate was the Golden Pavilion. The upper stories are covered in gold leaf and the roof is topped by a bronze phoenix. The reflection of the temple shimmers majestically in the waters of a rock-studded pond.

Proceed to Heian Shrine has a relatively short history, dating back just over a hundred years to 1895. The shrine was built on the occasion of the 1100th anniversary of the capital's foundation in Kyoto and is dedicated to the spirits of the first and last emperors who reigned from the city, Emperor Kammu and Emperor Komei. Heian is the former name of Kyoto. A giant torii gate marks the approach to the shrine, around which there are a couple of museums. The actual shrine grounds themselves are very spacious, with a wide open court at the center. The shrine's main buildings are a partial replica of the original Imperial Palace from the Heian Period, built on a somewhat smaller scale than the original.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 7 – NARA PARK

Breakfast and today we have another full day sightseeing of Nara and Uji.

Nara, the oldest capital of Japan was the cradle of Japanese arts, crafts and literature. Buddhism first flourished here under the strong patronage of successive Emperors. Walking through the city's quiet streets is like strolling through the pages of history. Here, you can find the peace of mind and spiritual contentment.

Todaiji Temple, completed in 752, houses one of the largest bronze statues in the world. The temple is approached through an imposing gate supported by eighteen 25-meter-high pillars. It was built in the eighth century. Blown down by a typhoon the gate was rebuilt in. It is a National Treasure, as are two wooden images of the Deva kings in its exterior niches. The present Hall of the Great Buddha, is the world's largest ancient wooden structure and a National Treasure. The Great Buddha, a National Treasure, was cast in bronze in eight sections over three years. The 16.2-meter-high figure is seated on a huge bronze pedestal 20.7 meters in circumference.

Situated in a forest, Kasuga Taisha Shrine conveys an atmosphere of peace and sanctity perhaps unmatched by any other shrine. Founded Fujiwara-no-Fuhito, the shrine has been identically reconstructed every 20 years. The buildings, painted vermilion, show the Kasuga style of architecture. Some 3,000 lanterns line the road east from the second torii gate. These are lit twice a year during the Mantoro festivals. Through the south gate visitors enter spacious precincts. Beyond the Heiden, a floorless structure rises the Main Hall, surrounded by an impressive gallery. It comprises four buildings, all of which are National Treasures.

Nara Park is otherwise known as "Deer Park" for the twelve hundred deer which inhabit it. These tame deer roam through groves of cedars, and oaks, and romedas and wisteria. They have been deified and are strictly protected as messengers of deities of the Kasuga Taisha Shrine. Nara Park dates from 1880. It was designated as a place noted for scenic beauty by the National Government in 1922. Transfer to Osaka and check in at the 4* Rihga Royal Osaka.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 8 – OSAKA

After breakfast depart for city of Osaka. A water city that affords cruising pleasures and sightseeing. Osaka castle-the symbol of Osaka with its over 400 years of history fusing the old and new, with towering skyscrapers abounded cherry blossom trees and soundings waterways. A sight to be enjoyed in any season. The Osaka Castle was built in the end of the 16th century by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a well-known warlord who brought the whole country under his rule in the late 16th century. It has been burned down in a series of battles in the 17th century, and reconstructed later. Once again it was destroyed by fire, its donjon only reduced to ashes this time, and was reconstructed at last early in the 20th century. On display at its 1st to 7th floors are various weapons, armors and folklife items of those days. There is a view spot on the 8th floor.

The Umeda Sky Building is a spectacular high rise building in the Kita district of Osaka, near Osaka and Umeda Stations. It is also known as the "New Umeda City". The 173 meter tall building consists of two main towers which are connected with each other by the "Floating Garden Observatory" on the 39th floor.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 9 – OSAKA - SEOUL

Breakfast and transfer to Airport for flight to Seoul. Arrival at Incheon airport, meet and greet and transfer to the 5* Grand Hyatt Hotel. Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 10 – SEOUL

After breakfast proceed for Seoul tour including National Museum of Korea. This new museum built in 2005 is boasting its fantastic collection of Korean arts and relics. It would take a whole day to see everything in the museum. The next visit at Changdeok Palace & Huwon (Secret Garden), UNESCO designated World Heritage. Walking tour of Bukchon Hano Village. Visit Seoul Tower on Mt. Namsan for a bird's eye view of Metropolitan city of Seoul. Also visit Namdaemun traditional market, it is the biggest market in Korea. Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 11 – SEOUL - DAEGU

Breakfast at hotel and transfer to Korean Folk Village outside of Seoul, where the old traditional style houses and life style of 18th-19th century are being practiced by people living in the village. Proceed to Songnisan National Park to visit Beopjusa Temple where you can find the tallest Buddha Statue in Korea. The forest park is ideal place for walking. Afterward, drive to Daegu via expressway. Check in at the 4*Daegu Grand Hotel. Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 12 – SEOUL - GYEONGJU

Breakfast at hotel. Transfer to Gyeongju, the capital of the Silla kingdom from 57BC - 935AD and the city is also known as the "Museum without walls," as there are 52 designated sites within this city. Upon arrival in Gyeongju, half day Gyeongju tour including Cheomseongdae Astronomic Observatory, Royal Tumuli Park with its Royal tombs. You will have the chance to enter one of the excavated tombs to see the construction and process behind the Royal Kings burial chambers. Last visit is at Bulguksa Temple although rebuilt following destruction by the Japanese during their occupancy. The Temple has been completely restored to its former glory. Check in at the 5* Gyeongju Hilton Hotel.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 13 – GYEONGJU

After breakfast, start your full day tour of Gyeongju by visiting Seokguram Grotto, established in the 8th century on the slopes of Mt. Toham. The grotto contains a monumental statue of a sitting Buddha looking out to sea and it is considered a masterpiece of Buddhist art in the Far East. 4 faces Buddha, Gwaeneung Royal Tomb and Scenic drive tour to Guryongpo Port. Drive along the sea for beautiful coastal scenery.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 14 – GYEONGJU - BUSAN

After breakfast, check out and transfer to Unmoonsa Temple (Buddhist Nun's temple). Proceed to Busan, the second largest city of South Korea. Upon arrival, start half-day Busan tour to Busan Tower on Mt Yongdusan with its observation deck offering stunning views of the city and beyond, Jagalchi Fishery Market where roadside vendors sell various fishes and Nampodong Street. Check in at the 5* Busan Paradise Hotel.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 15 – BUSAN - CHUNGJU

After breakfast, transfer to Mt Gayasan National Park via expressway. In Mt Gayasan National Park, visit Haeinsa Temple. Haeinsa Temple has a world famous Korean cultural treasure called Tripikata Koreana, which was made during the Goryo Dynasty to protect the country from the invasion of Mongolian troops by Buddha's power. UNESCO as World Cultural Heritage designated this Tripitaka Koreana. Proceed to Andong, 2 hours away from Haeinsa. Andong is the best-preserved village with its traditional style noble houses. In 1999, Queen Elisabeth II visited Hahoe Village and was welcomed with Birthday Party Table decorated in Korean traditional way. Hahoe Village in Andong is famous for its own mask dance. After a visit to Hahoe Village, proceed to Chungju Lake. Check in at the 3*Cheongpoong Resort. Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 16 – CHUNGJU

After breakfast, take a ride on Sightseeing Boat for lakeside scenery.

Transfer to Mt Seorak National Park via Pyeongchang. Visit Woljeongsa Temple, this temple is famous for its pine tree road. Proceed to Gangneung, visit Chamsori Gramophone & Audio Museum. This museum boasts itself with incredible collection of 19th Century gramophones and 1st generation audio systems. Proceed to Sokcho and visit Naksan beach and Naksan Temple on the way to Sokcho.

Check in at the 5*Kensinton Star hotel.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 17 – MT SEORAK NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, transfer to DMZ Unification Observatory at demarcation line at East Coast for a very close view of North Korea and Repository of nature in ecosystem DMZ museum.

Return to Mt. Seorak National Park for cable car ride to Gwonggumseong Fortress and visit Sinheungsa Temple. Visit Dongmyeong local port in the evening.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 18 – MT SEORAK NATIONAL PARK - SEOUL

After breakfast, transfer to Gapyeong to visit the Garden of Morning Calm Flower and Tree Park, which displays unique Korean Wild Flowers and trees in a garden located in mountain valley.

Transfer to Seoul. Check in at the 5* Grand Hyatt hotel and time at leisure in the afternoon.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 19 – SEOUL - MALTA

Breakfast at the hotel, morning at leisure and in the afternoon proceed for half day Seoul tour visiting Jongmyo Shrine (UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE), Insadong Antique Alley, Deoksu palace

After the tour transfer to the Airport for your flight back to Malta.

Meals: Breakfast.

DAY 20 – MALTA

Arrival in Malta.

**ALL
EXCURSIONS
INCLUDED**



PACKAGE PRICE PER PERSON

BOOK	BEFORE 31 ST MAR	AFTER 31 ST MAR
TRIPLE SHARING	€ 4599	€ 4799
TWIN SHARING	€ 4899	€ 5099
SINGLE	€ 5659	€ 5859

OUR PACKAGE INCLUDES

- ✓ RETURN INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS MALTA/TOKYO/SEOUL/MALTA
- ✓ ONE WAY FLIGHT FROM OSAKA TO SEOUL
- ✓ AIRLINE TAXES AND FUEL CHARGES
- ✓ 17 NIGHTS SUPERIOR ACCOMMODATION
- ✓ ALL TRANSFERS
- ✓ ALL EXCURSIONS AND SIGHTSEEING AS PER ITINERARY
- ✓ 18 MEALS - 17 BREAKFASTS , 1 LUNCH
- ✓ SERVICES OF A LOCAL ENGLISH SPEAKING GUIDE
- ✓ COMPREHENSIVE GUIDED SIGHTSEEING
- ✓ ACTIVE ITINERARY WITH UNIQUE CULTURAL FEATURES
- ✓ SERVICES OF AN EXPERIENCED ROCS TRAVEL TOUR MANAGER

VISA REQUIRED

All bookings are subject to our general information, booking conditions and information. Photographs of rooms are indicative of room type available. Facilities described may be seasonal. Rates are per person and include: return flights, accommodation as stated and airline taxes. Fuel surcharge may apply. Special offers applicable only in specific periods. Prices may vary without notice. For a full list of terms & conditions kindly visit www.rocsgrp.com/travel/terms. For a more detailed description, full details of facilities and supplements, please refer to our website. E&OE.