

# *The Great North: Hokkaido & Tohoku*



## **Your Japan trip at a glance**

*Tohoku (northeast Japan) and Hokkaido offer some of the country's most breathtaking scenery. In summer, it's a great place to go to escape the heat whilst in winter you can luxuriate in some of the loveliest onsen ("hot springs") whilst looking out over the snow covered landscape.*

## Tokyo

Home to over 12 million people, the vast metropolis of Japan's capital must be seen to be believed. Tokyo embraces the modern and ancient like no other city on earth and offers something for everyone who wants to delve into the Japanese phenomenon: the towering skyscrapers and frenzied neon of Shinjuku, the pop culture and gadget paradise of Akihabara, the sophisticated chic of Ginza, the biggest and liveliest fish market in the world, the old downtown area of Asakusa, and the tranquil, understated beauty of Meiji Shrine. Not to mention superb restaurants and great bars as well as fabulous shopping and museums befitting the capital of the world's second-largest economy.



## Matsushima

Matsushima is located in the central part of Miyagi Prefecture. There are some 260 beautiful islands, scattered in picturesque Matsushima Bay. The view of Matsushima changes from place-to-place and from-season-to-season, and its famous view is ranked as one of the Top Three Views of Japan. Nearby cultural properties include Zuigan-ji, Entsu-in, Kanrantei, and the Satohama shell mound.

## Nyuto Onsen (Akita)

Nyuto Onsen is one of Japan's most beautiful hot spring areas, famous for its milky-white spring water which is purported to have numerous health benefits. It is nestled away in the mountains of Akita Prefecture, where the scenery is beautiful, and nearby Mt Komagatake offers good hiking. Nearby Kakunodate, with its lovely samurai-era streets, makes a good day trip from here.



## Hokkaido

Home to Japan's native Ainu people, Hokkaido is the second largest, northernmost and least developed of Japan's four main islands. It is home to the nation's fifth largest city of Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido, pleasant and picturesque rural towns of Biei and Furano, and Hokkaido's most famous hot spring resort of Noboribetsu.



## Japan Rail Pass

The JR Pass allows you almost unlimited travel for 7/14/21 days on **all** Japan Rail lines throughout the country. It allows you to travel on the world-famous Bullet Train (*Shinkansen*) as well as the popular ferry from Hiroshima to Miyajima.



## Tour Itinerary

### Day 1: Arrive in Japan

Welcome to Japan. Our friendly Meet & Greet service representative will be waiting in the Arrivals lobby in Narita Airport (Tokyo) and will direct you to the Narita Express train or limousine bus bound for Tokyo. Check into your clean and comfortable hotel in Tokyo for 2 nights on a bed & breakfast basis.

### Day 2: Tokyo

Your options are unlimited in this incredible city. Explore Tokyo's past in the bustling, traditional Asakusa district, visit the world's largest fish market at Tsukiji, shop in the fashionable districts of Shibuya and Harajuku and dine on Japan's finest cuisine. Tokyo is relatively straightforward to navigate, and our Information Pack will make travelling around the city a breeze.

#### *Optional guided excursion*

*Enjoy a full day of sightseeing by coach in Tokyo, with lunch included. Your guide will show you the highlights of this vast metropolis, from the Imperial Palace and serene Meiji Shrine to the 'Electric City' of Akihabara.*

### Day 3: Tokyo-Matsushima **(Start using your 7 Day Japan Rail Pass today)**

It's time to say goodbye to Tokyo and speed on the Bullet Train to Matsushima. The journey takes less than 3 hours and you have a plenty of time in the afternoon to visit the sights of Matsushima including the famous Rinzai Zen Buddhist temple and Zuiganji Temple as well as nearby cultural properties. Visit some of the islands in the Bay (via the picturesque red painted bridge) or enjoy a cruise across Sendai Bay to take in the beautiful views of Matsushima. You will stay in a comfortable hotel in Matsushima for 1 night.

### Day 4: Matsushima – Nyuto Onsen

Spend the morning visiting some of the islands in the Bay (via the picturesque red painted bridge) or enjoy a cruise across Sendai Bay to take in the beautiful views of the picturesque archipelago – designated one of Japan's top 3 most beautiful places. This afternoon, set off to Nyuto Onsen. You will stay at Tsurunoyu onsen, the oldest onsen in the region, regarded as among the most beautiful in the country. Here you will have a truly authentic and relaxing experience. Check in here for 2 nights. A Japanese haute-cuisine *kaiseki dinner* and breakfast are included both nights.

### Day 5: Nyuto Onsen

Spend today exploring the surrounding area. You can make a short trip over to Kakunodate, where you can feel the atmosphere of a past age as you stroll down the beautifully preserved samurai-era streets, or go for a bracing hike on Mt Komagatake. There's nothing better than a good soak in a hot spring after an invigorating walk!

### Day 6: Nyuto Onsen – Sapporo

Depart from Nyuto Onsen to Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido. You'll spend most of today travelling by train as the journey time is around 7 hours. Check into your hotel in the central of Sapporo for 3 nights. Whilst in Hokkaido you might want to visit the 147.2m Sapporo TV tower which offers a superb observation deck over the city. Hokkaido is also well known for its delicious local food so good places to visit include Nijo Food Market, Shiroyo Park (a theme park run by a local chocolate company) as well as the Sapporo Beer Museum. Alternatively you may want to visit the lovely harbor city Otaru near Sapporo.

### **Day 7: Furano**

Today we suggest you make the day trip to Furano situated in the centre of Hokkaido which is famous for its beautiful scenery and fine farming. Visit one of Hokkaido's premier flower farms complete with its own cafes, and delicious local ice cream stalls including the famous local lavender ice cream. You could also visit the Furano Winery (a working winery) as well as the Furano Cheese Factory where you can observe its production process and join hands-on workshops.

### **Day 8: Noboribetsu Onsen**

Today we suggest you make the day trip to Hokkaido's most famous hot spring resort, Noboribetsu Onsen in southwestern Hokkaido. Jigokudani or "Hell Valley" is a spectacular, appropriately named valley just above the town of Noboribetsu Onsen, where you can view hot steam vents, sulfurous streams and other volcanic activity.

### **Day 9: Sapporo-Tokyo**

Enjoy the morning in the lovely surroundings of your hotel before heading back to Tokyo. You have a choice of returning to Tokyo by train (approximately 10 hours) (included in the package price) or by plane (for an additional amount). Spend your last free day in Tokyo and check into your comfortable hotel for 1 night.

### **Day 10: Depart Japan**

Transfer from your hotel to Narita International Airport (Tokyo).



*Sapporo TV Tower*



*Jigokudani ("Hell Valley")*

## PRICE INCLUDES:

- 6 nights' accommodation in a Double/Twin room on a bed and breakfast basis in Tokyo and Sapporo.
- 1 night's accommodation in a Japanese style room in a hotel-*ryokan* including a delicious Japanese **dinner** and breakfast in Matsushima.
- 2 nights' accommodation in a traditional Japanese *ryokan* including a delicious Japanese **dinner** and breakfast in Tsurunoyu Onsen.
- 7-day Japan Rail Pass allowing you unlimited travel on the entire Japan Rail network including Shinkansen
- Delicious included dinners: on Days 3, 4 and 5
- Meet & Greet service on arrival at Narita International Airport (Tokyo)
- Transfers from and to Narita International Airport/Tokyo
- Detailed Japan Journeys Information Pack including detailed train schedules, maps, & brochures
- Personalised Japan Journeys App to help manage your documents
- All Japanese sales taxes and service charge
- Full financial protection via Japan Journeys' membership of the Travel Trust Association through which your monies are held in a Trust Account until you return home (under Membership No. U3078), see: <http://www.traveltrust.co.uk>

## NOT INCLUDED IN PRICE:

- International airfare
- Domestic flights to/from Sapporo
- Meals not mentioned above
- Entrance fees
- Taxi, subway and tramway fees
- Travel insurance

## PRICE:

3\* accommodation *from £1,495.00 per person based on Twin/Double room occupancy*

4\* accommodation *from £1,895.00 per person based on Twin/Double room occupancy*

3\* Single room occupancy *from £1,645.00*

4\* Single room occupancy *from £2,195.00*

### *Optional guided excursions on Day 2:*

Tokyo: **£101.00** per person

*All price estimates are based on current rates of exchange and are subject to availability.*

To make a booking, a deposit of **£ 200.00** per person is required. The balance of the price of the trip must be made 12 weeks prior to departure.

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