

Kyushu: Islands & Onsen



Sand Baths at Ibusuki, Kagoshima

Your Japan trip at a glance

An itinerary designed for those who want to delve deeper into this fascinating country. Culture, nature, history, and shopping, Kyushu really has it all. Start off in lively Fukuoka with its night time riverside eateries, before moving to the port of Nagasaki, where a long history of visitors has given this old town a truly unique atmosphere. From here head to the chilled-out, sub-tropical city of Kagoshima, where you can explore the spectacular Sakurajima volcano and visit some of the most unspoilt samurai villas in Japan. You move on to Yakushima, a gorgeous emerald island that is one of Japan's few pristine natural environments. The rugged mountains and primeval forest of ancient cedars make this an unmissable experience. After taking the ferry back to the mainland, we head via Kumamoto to Kurokawa Onsen, a picturesque hot spring village nestled deep in the mountains of central Kyushu where you will stay in a traditional Japanese ryokan. Next on your trail is Beppu, another hot spring town – but with a twist. Beppu is home to eight 'hells', which are hot springs that are for viewing rather than bathing, each of which is a sight to behold. Enjoy your last night of this memorable adventure back in Fukuoka before flying home the following day.

Fukuoka

Fukuoka, the capital of Fukuoka Prefecture, sits on the northern shore of Japan's Kyushu Island. It's known for its ancient temples, beaches and modern shopping malls, including Canal City. Its expansive Fukuoka Art Museum lies within tranquil Ohori Park, and neighbouring Maizuru Park contains ruins of the 17th-century Fukuoka Castle. Fukuoka is the birthplace of Tonkotsu ramen which has recently gained great popularity in the West – enjoy it in the way it was first conceived at one of Fukuoka's riverside street food 'yatai' stalls.



Nagasaki

Nagasaki is a pretty city on the island of Kyushu. Well known to many as the second target for the atomic bomb however this is not all that Nagasaki has to offer. The city has a slightly different feel to many other Japanese cities as it has had over two centuries of contact with Chinese, British, Dutch and Portuguese at a time when the rest of Japan was closed off to the world. You will be able to see the influences of various cultures around Nagasaki such as the European style houses and Catholic Churches in Glover Gardens (pictured)- the supposed setting for Puccini's Madame Butterfly. For something a bit different, take a day trip from Nagasaki to the resort town of Huis Ten Bosch which is a replica of an old Dutch town.

Kagoshima

Kagoshima, a seaside city on Japan's Kyushu Island, is the capital of Kagoshima Prefecture. It's best known for Sakurajima, an active volcano that faces Kinko Bay. At its base, the Nagisa Lava Trail leads to lava boulders and pine trees. Once set on an isolated island, the volcano became connected to the Osumi Peninsula after an eruption in 1914.



Yakushima

Yakushima known for its wildlife and cedar forests. In the northwest is Nagata Inaka-hama, a beach with seasonal loggerhead turtle nesting grounds. The central Mt. Miyanoura is marked by the Arakawa trail and the ancient Jōmon Sugi tree. In the east, Yakusugi Museum has exhibits about the region's cedar forests. The western shore is home to towering Ōko-no-taki waterfall.

Kumamoto

Kumamoto is a lively town on Kyushu's west coast and a gateway to the island's picturesque, mountainous interior. Famous spots include the lovely garden *Suizenji Jojuen* and the residence of eminent writer and Japanologist Lefcadio Hearn. Look out for Japan's most famous mascot character Kumamon, the rosy-cheeked black bear.

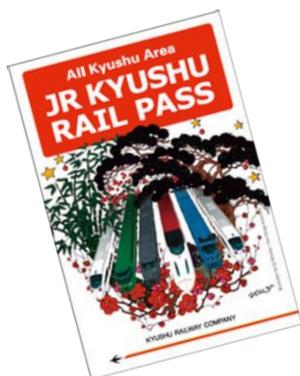


Kurokawa Onsen

Kurokawa Onsen is one of the most attractive hot spring towns in Japan, located in the middle of Kyushu. Kurokawa's townscape is dominated by natural colours and materials, wooden buildings, earthen walls, stone stairs and a river flowing through. The town's lanes are lined by ryokan, public bath houses, attractive shops and cafes, a small shrine and bridges that lead over the river directly to ryokan entrances. A walk through town is particularly enjoyable in yukata and geta sandals provided by one's ryokan.

Beppu

Beppu is a city and spa resort on the southern Japanese island of Kyushu. Set between Beppu Bay and volcanic mountains, it is home to more than 2,000 onsen (hot springs). Kannawa Onsen district has facilities for bathing in nutrient-rich water, mud and sand. The 8 Hells of Beppu – 6 in Kannawa, 2 in outlying Shibaseki – are dramatic landscapes of thermal pools. To the west is Mount Tsurumi, accessible by cable car.



All Kyushu Pass

Your 3 Day Japan Rail Pass allows you unlimited travel on JR lines throughout the region including the world-famous Bullet Train (*Shinkansen*).

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Japan – Fukuoka Airport

Welcome to Japan! Our friendly Meet & Greet service representative will be waiting in the Arrivals lobby and holding a sign with your name on. The Meet & Greet will direct you to the subway for the very short journey to your hotel. Check in to your clean and comfortable hotel in central Fukuoka for 1 night.

Day 2: Fukuoka to Nagasaki – Start Using Your JR Pass Today

Today you will set off by train to Nagasaki. This intriguing city has a vibrant multicultural history being one of the few cities open to foreign traders when the rest of the Japan was closed to the outside world. Visit the Nishizaka area, home to the serene Shofuku-ji (a Zen temple) and Nagasaki's biggest Shinto shrine Suwayama-jinja. Head down the hill from here to Nagasaki's Chinatown and on to the old Portuguese and Dutch enclaves where you can get a sense of what life was like for foreign communities in feudal Japan. Check in to your superbly located hotel for the next 2 nights.

Day 3: Nagasaki

This morning set out for Glover Garden, with its lovely nineteenth-century European villas, and the nearby Oura Church, the oldest in Japan. The 'Dutch Slopes' *Orandazaka* area is also well worth a visit. If you wish, consider a visit to the Peace Park and the Atomic Bomb Museum, the latter of which has excellent English guidance.

Day 4: Nagasaki to Kagoshima

Today you will head on to the island's southern capital of Kagoshima. Board the train to Tosu, where you will change to the world famous Japanese Bullet Train. The journey takes around 3 hours, giving you ample time in the afternoon to start exploring the city and check in to your hotel. You will stay here for 3 nights in your clean, comfortable and centrally located hotel.

Day 5: Kagoshima

Start your stay in Kagoshima with a visit to Sakurajima Island. Sakurajima itself is an active volcano located in Kagoshima Bay which forms a spectacular backdrop. Take a bus tour or rent a bike and explore the island where you can see spectacular views of the crater and lava fields from the observatories and relax in one of the outdoor hot spring baths on the hillside.

Day 6: Kagoshima

Today take a day trip to the Satsuma Peninsula, where your first stop should be the samurai villas in the quaint village of Chiran. Move on from here to the sand baths of Ibusuki where the sandy beaches are naturally heated by steam rising from below. Lie in the hot sand and enjoy the gorgeous view across the bay to Sakurajima island.

Day 7: Kagoshima to Yakushima

Spend the morning checking out a few of the city's other sights such as Sengan-en garden, before boarding the ferry for the verdant island of Yakushima. Check in to your comfortable and relaxing hotel for 2 nights. Dinner is included for both nights of your stay.

Day 8: Yakushima

Yakushima is renowned for being one of Japan's most beautiful wild places, and when you see it you will believe it. Head to Shiratani Unsuikyo, home of a large number of the island's famous *yakusugi* ancient indigenous cedar trees. This is the place that inspired master animator Hayao Miyazaki's Princess Mononoke. The park is accessible by bus, and is the trailhead for numerous of hikes of varying difficulty.

For serious hikers, there can be only one true objective on Yakushima – hidden in the very depths of the island's mountainous interior, the world's oldest tree, *Jomon-sugi*. If you are up for the challenge, prepare thoroughly for a 10 hour hike through the island's spectacular and rugged interior. For true hiking enthusiasts, this simply cannot be missed.

Day 9: Yakushima to Kumamoto

Enjoy a relaxing morning in your hotel before checking out and heading back to the mainland and on to the city of Kumamoto, gateway to Kyushu's gorgeous mountainous interior. Take a leisurely stroll around the city's Suizenji-joujuen garden or visit the residence of Lafcadio Hearn, famous for being the first to record many of Japan's folk tales in English. Check in to your clean and comfortable hotel in Kumamoto for one night.

Day 10: Kumamoto to Kurokawa Onsen

Today you will head into the mountains, bound for the hot spring town of Kurokawa Onsen. This quaint little town has managed to preserve its historic and peaceful atmosphere, as evidenced by its traditionally constructed buildings and abundant nature. Much of the town lies beside the winding river that flows along the valley floor, featuring many traditional shops and *onsen* hot spring baths that can easily be explored on foot. Check into your lovely Japanese ryokan hotel for a night, enjoy a delicious Japanese dinner (included) and relax in the *onsen*.

Day 11: Kurokawa Onsen to Beppu

Say goodbye to Kurokawa before heading off once more, this time to Beppu. To the Japanese, Beppu and hot springs are virtually synonymous. Visit the eight 'hells' of Beppu which are a collection of hot springs boasting unusual natural properties – sadly these are only for viewing but there are also plenty of other hot springs around town which you can try out. Check in to your clean and comfortable hotel for 2 nights.

Day 12: Beppu at Leisure

For a change of pace try the nearby Yufuin. Just a short train ride away, this quaint town retains a lot of traditional charm and has plenty of cafes, shops and museums making it a great day trip. Just outside the town is Lake Kinrinko, reached via a short walk through the paddy fields which should be memorable.

Day 13: Beppu to Fukuoka

This morning set off back to Fukuoka by train. The journey takes around two hours, leaving you to enjoy your final afternoon in Fukuoka. Maybe get some last minute shopping done in the stylish Canal City shopping centre, visit Ohori Park, or once the sun sets try one of the famous *yatai* riverside streetfood stalls – a great place to try the famous local *tonkotsu* style ramen. Check in to the same hotel in Fukuoka for 1 night.

Day 14: Return Home – Fukuoka Airport

Depart Japan from Fukuoka airport.

PRICE INCLUDES:

- 10 nights' accommodation in a Twin/Double room at 3*/4*hotels on a bed & breakfast basis.
- 2 nights' accommodation on Yakushima in a Twin room at 3*/4*hotels where breakfast and **dinner** are included.
- 1 night's accommodation in a Japanese *ryokan* in Kurokawa Onsen, breakfast and **dinner** included
- 3 day Kyushu Rail Pass allowing you unlimited travel on the entire JR Kyushu network including *Shinkansen* (Bullet Train) services
- Meet & Greet service on arrival at Fukuoka Airport
- 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
- Day 9: Train ticket from Kagoshima to Kumamoto (approximately 6,740 JPY)
- Day 10: Bus ticket from Kumamoto to Kurokawa Onsen (approximately 2,500 JPY)
- Day 11: Bus ticket from Kurokawa Onsen to Beppu (approximately 3,000 JPY)
- Day 13: Train ticket from Beppu to Fukuoka (approximately 7,750 JPY)
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Taxi, subway and tramway fees
- Insurance

PRICE:

3* accommodation	from £1,795.00 per person based on Twin/Double room occupancy
4* accommodation	from £2,395.00 per person based on Twin/Double room occupancy
3* Single room occupancy	from £2,075.00
4* Single room occupancy	from £2,745.00

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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