



Cherry Blossom and the Art of the Japanese Garden

25 MAR – 8 APR 2021

Code: 22103

Tour Leaders **Sabrina Hahn**

Physical Ratings 

Sabrina Hahn explores the many different meanings of traditional & modern Japanese gardens. The tour is timed for early April when the countryside explodes into symphonies of glorious cherry blossom.

Overview

Highlights

- Travel with [Sabrina Hahn](#), when Japan's countryside explodes into symphonies of glorious cherry blossom.
- Visit a diverse range of Japan's traditional gardens, including Kinkaku-ji (the Golden Pavilion) & Ryoan-ji (Dragon Peace Temple) in Kyoto, Isuien Garden in Nara and Kenrokuen Garden in Kanazawa.
- Encounter a stunning early modern interpretation of a traditional Japanese residence at the Former Kusuo Yasuda Residence in Tokyo (1919), newly reopened after a period of restoration.
- Explore some of Japan's splendid art collections, including Tokyo's Nezu Museum and the National Museum, the National Treasure Museum in Nara, the Japanese prints at the Ota Memorial Museum of Art, and the magnificent collection of kimonos at Itchiku Kubota Art Museum at the foot of Mt Fuji.
- Visit the Jiyu Gakuen School in Tokyo, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright when he lived in Japan.
- Experience Japan's unique culture at a tea ceremony in Kanazawa and lunch at the delightful restaurant of Happon Garden in Tokyo.
- View the great Buddha at Nara's impressive Todai-ji Temple, the world's largest timber building.
- Explore the historic Kiso Valley, where we find the well-preserved distinctive wooden architecture of the Edo era, and stroll along a section of the Nakasendo Highway.
- Stay one night in Nara in a *ryokan* – a traditional Japanese inn (or at the heritage Hotel Nara, which offers western-style accommodation).
- Sample Japanese sake and an array of traditional cuisine types, including *oskashi*, *shabu-shabu*, and the delicious array of small dishes presented as a *kaiseki* feast.

Testimonials

Wow, what a tour! We were very spoilt seeing Cherry Blossom in every city we visited and other Japanese plants were in bloom, giving great ideas for a Japanese garden. The art galleries and museums just added the final element to this tour. Marisa, VIC.

My recent trip to Japan was so much fun. I enjoyed every aspect of the tour, the Japanese people went out of their way to make us feel welcome and comfortable. The food was a great adventure and delicious. The hotels were very comfortable and in wonderful locations. Our drivers and guides were excellent. The gardens were beautifully maintained and peaceful places to wander. The cherry blossom was fabulous as were all the Japanese people who came to enjoy the leaves while they were at their best. Helen, VIC.

15-day Cultural Garden Tour of Japan

Overnight Tokyo (1 night) • Kawaguchiko (1 night) • Matsumoto (2 nights) • Kanazawa (1 night) • Kyoto (3 nights) • Nara (1 night) • Kyoto (2 nights) • Tokyo (3 nights)

Overview

The tour has been timed to visit Japan when its countryside explodes into symphonies of glorious cherry blossom. In historic centres like Kyoto and Nara and in Tokyo you'll discover how Japan's gardens can be experienced on many levels and are renowned for subtly combining artifice and nature, blurring the boundaries between garden and landscape. Some gardens are tiny and minimalist, conveying subtle meanings through ingenious combinations of moss, stones, rock and water. Others are grand, framing rich

palaces and temples like Tokyo's Imperial Palace East Garden. We combine garden visits with expressions of traditional Japanese culture like tea ceremonies, geisha rituals and cuisine. Kyoto gardens include extensive, ancient temple and garden complexes such as Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion), Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion) and Ryoan-ji – the famed Dragon Peace Temple. Throughout, garden visits are also combined with an appreciation of Japan's traditional architecture and great museums to enrich your understanding of Japanese aesthetics. In eighth-century capital Nara, architectural treasures, great collections and fine gardens include the Todai-ji Temple, the world's largest timber building, Kofuku-ji Temple with a five-storey pagoda and treasure trove of Buddhist statues; we also visit Nara National Museum. At Kanazawa we explore traditional construction techniques at Kanazawa Castle, Nagamachi Samurai Residence and Higashichaya District's many old Samurai houses. Kanazawa's Kenrokuen Garden is the 'garden of the six sublimities'. In Tokyo highlights include Happoen Garden where ladies in kimonos serve lunch in a delightful restaurant before we stroll through the gardens viewing 200-year-old bonsai trees. Rikugien Garden (c. 1700) is utterly Japanese, with manicured grass, artfully contorted pine trees held up by wooden supports, wooden tea houses, crooked rustic bridges over gurgling streams and a lake filled with carp and tiny turtles. Tokyo National Museum and the private Nezu Museum offer masterpieces to further inspire you. We also make a very special day tour to villages in Kiso Valley, carefully preserved monuments to Japan's feudal past, and stroll Japan's greatest natural symbol, Mt Fuji.

Leaders



Sabrina Hahn

ABC radio presenter, garden writer & horticultural consultant specialising in Australian & Mediterranean garden design. Sabrina also works on planting programs in remote Aboriginal communities. She has led ASA garden tours to France, Italy, Spain, Morocco, the UK and Western Australia since 2008.

Sabrina first joined ASA in 2008 and has since led numerous garden tours for ASA to Italy, France, Spain, Morocco, the UK and Western Australia. Sabrina has a great passion for plants, gardens and their place in the greater landscape. She explores the relationship between landscape and people's sense of belonging. Sabrina's love of travel to other Mediterranean climates allows her to share her knowledge of gardening in Western Australia with fellow gardening enthusiasts and translate its place in the Australian landscape. Her plant knowledge has been passed down from 3 generations of obsessive gardeners, leaving her in little doubt of what to study as a career path.

Sabrina started her studies in Horticulture at TAFE, graduated to studying Applied Science and later Social Science. Sabrina has been the ABC gardening talkback expert in Western Australia since 1985, when she began her career in Kalgoorlie. Sabrina also writes a weekly column in the West Australian newspaper on all things green. Her aim is to make gardening an entertaining pastime and educate listeners in the importance of creating biodiversity in their own backyards. She believes gardeners have a role to play in becoming caretakers of sustainable landscapes that allows other species to thrive.

Sabrina can be heard on ABC Saturday mornings on 720 from 9-10am and on all local ABC stations during the graveyard shift with Trevor Chappel at 1.30am on Tuesday mornings.

Sabrina has owned and managed a landscaping business, lectured at University, consulted for prison nurseries, local government, private enterprise and set up edible gardens in schools. She is well known for her direct and humorous MC work and is a sought-after guest speaker.

Her latest venture is working with a philanthropic organisation, EON, in remote Aboriginal communities in the Kimberley, setting up edible gardens to ensure children have access to fresh fruit and vegetables. She has worked closely with community elders to collect and grow bush tucker plants to plant out within the schoolgrounds so that elders can teach children the uses of traditional food and medicine. The program has been highly successful; it is in its fourth year and Sabrina and EON are entering their seventh remote school.

Sabrina continues to work as a horticultural consultant and garden designer for many organisations, government and private bodies, but still enjoys travelling to other countries to discover how landscapes influence culture.

Sabrina's website: <https://sabinahahn.com.au>



Itinerary

The following itinerary describes a range of gardens, museums and other sites which we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but others require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, flight and train schedules and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=evening meal.

Tokyo - 1 night

Day 1: Thursday 25 March, Arrive Tokyo

- Arrival transfer for those travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight
- Welcome Dinner

After our arrival in Tokyo, those taking the ASA 'designated' flight transfer by private to the [Hotel New Otani Tokyo](#). This hotel stands within a beautiful traditional Japanese garden originally designed for the *daimyo* (feudal lord) Kato Kiyomasa Lord of Kumamoto in Kyustiu over four hundred years ago. This garden is well worth strolling through and will introduce you to many facets of the Japanese gardens we shall visit in the coming weeks. Tonight we enjoy a Welcome Dinner at our hotel. (Overnight Tokyo) D

Kawaguchiko - 1 night

Day 2: Friday 26 March, Tokyo – Kawaguchiko

- Nezu Museum, Tokyo
- Sankei-en Garden

We start the day with a visit to the Nezu Museum, showcasing traditional Japanese and Asian works of art once owned by Kaichiro Nezu, a railroad magnate and politician. The museum has a collection of 7,000 works of calligraphy, paintings, sculptures, bronzes, and lacquer ware. We will also explore the building's surroundings – one of Tokyo's finest gardens.

We then depart Tokyo by coach and travel west to Kawaguchiko, located at the foot of the iconic Mt Fuji, the largest volcano in Japan. This is Japan's highest peak at 3,776m. It last erupted in 1707 and forms a near perfect cone. Mount Fuji is arguably Japan's most important landmark, which stands for the nation's identity. It has been pictured countless times, not least in Katsushika Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* (1826-1833).

On the way we visit the beautiful Sankei-en Garden, a spacious Japanese style garden in southern Yokohama, in which are set a number of historic buildings from across Japan. There is a pond, small rivers, a profusion of flowers and wonderful scrolling trails. The garden, built by Hara Sankei, was opened to the public in 1904. Among the historic buildings in the park are the elegant residence of a *daimyo* (feudal lord), several tea houses, and the main hall and three storied pagoda of Kyoto's old Tomyoji Temple. A boxed lunch will be provided.

Tonight we dine together at the hotel. (Overnight Kawaguchiko) BLD

Note: Our luggage will be transported separately to our hotel in Matsumoto. An overnight bag will be needed for use in Kawaguchiko.

Matsumoto - 2 nights

Day 3: Saturday 27 March, Kawaguchiko – Matsumoto

- Fifth Station of Mt Fuji
- Itchiku Kubota Art Museum
- Nakamachi Street and Kurassic-kan
- Matsumoto Rising Castle

This morning we drive up Mt Fuji to the Fifth Station, where, weather permitting, we can enjoy spectacular views of the snow-capped peak. A gentle stroll will allow us to identify some of the native flora of this region.

In Kawaguchiko we will visit the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum. When the artist Itchiku Kubota was young, he encountered an example of 'Tsuji-gahana' at the Tokyo National Museum. 'Tsuji-gahana' was a technique used in dying kimonos during the 15th and 16th century, an art that was later lost. Kubota-san revived the art and created a series of kimonos decorated with mountain landscapes in all four seasons and Mount Fuji. These kimonos are displayed in a breathtaking setting. The main building is a pyramid-shaped structure supported by sixteen *hiba* (cypress) beams more than 1,000 years old. Other parts of the museum, displaying an antique glass bead collection, are constructed of Ryukyu limestone. The museum's unique architecture is set against a lovely garden and red pine forest.

We then focus upon Matsumoto and its surrounds for the next two days. On arrival in the town, we walk through the historic Nakamachi-dori, a street lined with white-walled traditional inns, restaurants and antique shops. Here we visit the Nakamachi Kurassic-kan, an historic sake brewery with black-beamed interiors and traditional plaster-work outside. We cross the river to walk along the market street Nawate-dori before arriving at Matsumoto-jo, the imposing castle approached across a moat.

Matsumoto-jo was founded by the Ogasawara clan in 1504 but it was another lord, Ishikawa, who remodeled the fortress in 1593 and built the imposing black five-tier donjon that is now the oldest keep in Japan. From the top of the tower we enjoy spectacular views of the town and surrounding mountains. (Overnight Matsumoto) B

Day 4: Sunday 28 March, Matsumoto – Kiso Valley – Matsumoto

- Magome
- Tsumago

Today we drive out of Matsumoto and head to the Kiso Valley for a taste of how Japan looked prior to urbanisation. Developed by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu as one of the five main highways linking his capital Edo (Tokyo) with the rest of Japan, the valley contains eleven post towns and some of them have been preserved as a virtual museum of the feudal past.

As we follow the valley we'll enjoy features of the Nakasendo route, including Kiso Fukushima, the location of a major barrier, but today the gateway to the sacred mountain of Ontake.

Tsumago was a ghost town 30 years ago, with its traditional Edo-era houses on the point of collapse. Its restoration sparked the idea of cultural preservation in Japan. The pedestrian-only street is similar to that once encountered by lords and their samurai centuries ago. The highlight of Tsumago is Okuya Kyodokan, a folk museum inside a designated post inn, where the *daimyo's* (feudal lord) retinue rested. On the opposite side of the street the Kyu-honjin is where the *daimyo* used to stay. We will also visit Magome, which means 'horse-basket', because this is where travellers were forced to leave their horses before tackling the mountainous roads ahead.

Our final visit for the day is to the Nagiso Town Museum. Opened in 1995, the Museum has three divisions: Tsumago Post Town Honjin, a *sub-honjin*, and a history museum. (A *honjin* is a temporary residence for a lord or dignitary to stay in when traveling to and from the shogunate capital of Edo.) The present building of the *subhonjin* was built in 1878 utilising Japanese cypress throughout, a type of wood proscribed for ordinary construction during the Edo period (1600-1868). The History Museum contains historical materials of Nagiso Town and history of the trust organisation dedicated to the preservation of historic towns, villages, and neighbourhoods. From here we return to Matsumoto, where you can explore the city on your own and enjoy dinner at a traditional restaurant. (Overnight Matsumoto) B

Kanazawa - 1 night

Day 5: Monday 29 March, Matsumoto – Kanazawa

- Shinkansen Superexpress train to Kanazawa
- Nomura-ke (restored samurai residence & house garden)
- Ishikawa-ken History Museum
- Higashi-Chayamachi District

This morning we travel by coach to Nagano, where we board the new Shinkansen Superexpress train to Kanazawa, considered one Japan's best-preserved Edo-period cities. The Japanese visit Kanazawa in droves but perhaps because of its remote location and very cold winters few foreigners make the journey to experience its rich cultural legacies.

The feudal atmosphere of Kanazawa still lingers in the Nagamachi district, where old houses of the

Nagamachi Samurai line the streets that once belonged to Kaga Clan Samurais. The T-shaped and L-shaped alleys are distinct characteristics of the feudal town, and the mud doors and gates of the houses remain the same as they were 400 years ago. The houses with their samurai windows (*bushimado*) and mud walls under the yellow Kobaita wooden roofs, which were protected from snow by straw mats (*komo*), evoke a bygone era.

During the Edo Period (1603-1867), the scale and dispensation of land to samurai families who lived in this district, and others in the city, was a fairly accurate indicator of rank. One of the larger Nagamachi estates was assigned to Nomura Denbei Nobusada, a senior official in the service of the first feudal lord of the Kaga domain. The reforms that accompanied the Meiji Restoration in 1868 decimated the lifestyles of the socially privileged. The samurai, whose social class was nullified, not only had their stipends terminated, but their estates were also appropriated by the state. Consequently, the Nomura family, whose considerable land holdings dated back 12 generations, lost their home and were reduced to turning a section of the remaining part of their property over to the cultivation of fruit and vegetables. Though they were discouraged from public displays of ostentation, merchant families and those of former samurai were not prohibited from commissioning the construction of exquisite gardens.

We visit the restored residence of Nomura, displaying the lifestyle and artefacts of the era, and explore its garden which features trees that are over 400 years old. Broad, irregularly shaped stepping stones provide access to the inner garden whose attractive entrance is flanked by a Chinese maple tree with leaves that turn a brilliant red in autumn. We also visit the Ishikawa-ken History Museum that is dedicated to the history of this prefecture.

Across the Asano River is the district of Higashi-Chayamachi, Kanazawa's most famous geisha district. Many of the tall wooden-latticed houses on the narrow streets are still used by geisha for high-class entertainment as they have done since 1820 when the area was established as a geisha quarter. You can take tea (without geisha) at Shima House for a chance to experience its refined and elegant atmosphere. This district has been designated as one of Japan's cultural assets. (Overnight Kanazawa) B

Note: Our luggage will be transported separately to our hotel in Kyoto. An overnight bag will be needed for use in Kanazawa.

Kyoto - 3 nights

Day 6: Tuesday 30 March, Kanazawa – Kyoto

- Kanazawa Castle (exterior)
- Kenroku-en, Kanazawa
- Tea Ceremony at the Nishida Family Gardens 'Gyokusen-en'
- Ishikawa Prefectural Museum for Traditional Products and Crafts (time permitting)
- Train from Kanazawa to Kyoto

Our first destination this morning is Kanazawa Castle, the seat of power of the local Maeda clan, hereditary feudal lords (*daimyo*) of the Kaga province from 1583. Burnt down on a number of occasions, only the superb Ishikawa Gate and the Sanjikken Nagaya samurai dwelling survive from the original construction.

Kenroku-en is Kanazawa's prime attraction and one of the three most famous gardens in Japan, along with Koraku-en (Okayama) and Kairaku-en (Mito). Kenroku-en was once the outer garden of Kanazawa Castle and there has been a garden on the site since the late 1600s. The original garden, begun by the fifth Maeda lord, Tsunonori Maeda, was called Renchi tei but it was almost entirely burnt out in 1759. It was

restored in the 1770s and in 1822 became known as Kenroku-en, a name that means 'the garden of six sublimesties' or, 'a garden combining the six aspects of a perfect garden'. These six features were what the Chinese traditionally believed were necessary for the ideal garden – spaciousness and seclusion, artifice and antiquity, water-courses and panoramas: all these characteristics are to be found in the 25 acres of this beautiful garden. Beside the garden is a former samurai residence belonging to the Nishida family with a beautiful charming garden 'Gyokusen-en', where we shall partake in a traditional tea ceremony.

Time permitting, we also visit the Museum for Traditional Products and Crafts, which showcases the fine arts and crafts of Ishikawa, a Prefecture whose culture of fine arts and traditional crafts compares with that of Tokyo and Kyoto. Highlights of the collection include feudal *daimyo* utensils using the Kaga Makie technique, Kutani porcelain from Ko-kutani (Old Kutani) and Wajima lacquer-ware.

We then transfer to the train station to take the train south to Kyoto. Kyoto was the capital of Japan from the late 8th century (c.794 AD) until 1868, when the court was moved to Tokyo. It is home to 17 World Heritage Sites, 1600 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines, yet much of the city centre is modern. One of the finest of its contemporary buildings is its dramatic railway station.

In the evening you may choose to make an optional visit to the Gion district of Kyoto for a glimpse of a vanishing world – home to geisha houses and traditional teahouses. Although the number of geishas has declined over the last century the area is still famous for the preservation of forms of traditional architecture and entertainment. To experience the traditional Gion, we stroll along Hanami-koji, a street lined by beautiful old buildings, including teahouses, where you may be able to glimpse a geisha apprentice. Contrary to popular belief Gion is not a red-light district, nor are geishas prostitutes. Geishas are young girls or women extensively trained as entertainers and skilled in a number of traditional Japanese arts such as classical music and dance as well as the performance of the exacting rituals of a Japanese tea ceremony. (Overnight Kyoto) B

Day 7: Wednesday 31 March, Kyoto

- Ryoan-ji (Dragon Peace Temple)
- Kinkaku-ji (Temple of the Golden Pavilion)
- Daitoku-ji Buddhist Complex incl. the Ryogen-in, Zuiho-in, Korin-in and Daisen-in

Kyoto is notable for its extraordinary diversity of Japanese gardens, including many of the finest traditional temple gardens. Our first visit in Kyoto is to the Golden Pavilion (Kinkaku-ji). During the 15th century the Chinese Sung Dynasty exercised an enormous influence in Japan as artists, poets and Zen priests were gathered together by Yoshimitsu, the third Ashikaga shogun (1358-1409). Yoshimitsu began construction of the Golden Pavilion just before he retired in 1394, handing power to his nine-year-old son so that he could move to his estate. Little of his work remains but we can sense the character of the garden in its pond, rockwork and extensive plantings.

We first visit Ryoan-ji – the Dragon Peace Temple. No other garden in the world is so simple, elegant and refined. The garden comprises 15 rocks in a sea of raked gravel surrounded by a compacted mud wall coated in oil that is in itself a national treasure. The garden dates from 1500 as part of a temple of the Renzai sect of Zen Buddhism. The temple burned but was reconstructed in its original form. The garden constitutes the supreme example of a dry garden where gravel and rock symbolise plant and water elements. Indeed, apart from the moss on the rocks, no other plants grow in it. The meaning of the garden remains unknown. It might symbolise islands in a sea, mountains seen through clouds or tigers and cubs crossing a river, but this doesn't matter since this is a garden to encourage contemplation, the enclosing wall separating the visitor from the world outside, and the verandah creating a horizontal boundary.

The pavilion at Kinkaku-ji recalls Sung period architecture but it is a recreation, having been burned down in the 1950s. The present building is an exact replica except that where Yoshimitsu proposed only to gild the ceiling of the third storey with gold; now the whole building is gilded. Yoshimitsu positioned his palace on the edge of a lake. The ground floor was a reception room for guests and departure point for leisure boating, the first storey was for philosophical discussions and panoramic views of the lake while the upper floor acted as a refuge for Yoshimitsu and was used for tea ceremonies. The size of the gardens is increased visually by the water's convoluted edge, the use of rocks and clipped trees and by visually 'borrowing' a distant view of Mt Kinugasa that creates a sense of gradation between foreground, middleground and deep distance.

We conclude the day with a visit to Daitoku-ji, a large complex of Zen temples with prayer halls, religious structures and 23 sub-temples with some of the most exquisite gardens in Kyoto, some quite small, including raked gravel gardens and, in the Daisen-in, one of the most celebrated small rock gardens in Japan. The Japanese consider Daitoku-ji one of the most privileged places to study and it is associated with many of Japan's most famous priests. Unlike many of the larger public Buddhist temples of earlier sects, the Rinzaï sect monasteries were intimate, inward looking and remained isolated from the outside world.

The temple received imperial patronage and thus grew out from its centre in an organic way. A transition occurred as the complex expanded from a formal centre to semiformal and informal precincts. The central north-south walkway is most formal with wide paths to accommodate processions and ceremonies, while to the side are sub-temples with gates. As you walk through one of these gates you immediately come upon a less formal world with narrow paths, turns and walkways. The temple site contains a number of notable gardens including Daisen-in, Korin-in and Zuiho-in and Ryogen-in. (Overnight Kyoto) B

Day 8: Thursday 1 April, Kyoto

- Tenryu-ji
- Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion)
- Philosopher's Path
- Nanzen-ji Temple Complex incl. the Hojo and Konchi-in

We first visit the Tenryu-ji, which dates from the period of shogun Ashikaga Takauji (1339). He commissioned the priest Muso Kokushi – one of Japan's best known garden designers, who also designed the moss garden at Saiho-ji – to create this garden. Kokushi's work modified an estate of Emperor Gosaga from 1270. He changed its form to include an Heian-style pond garden with popular, contemporary Chinese aspects. These included most notably a group of seven vertical rocks near the rear shore of its pond. These contrast markedly with Japanese rock work that takes a more horizontal form. This is one of the earliest gardens to show *shakkei*, the incorporation of borrowed landscape into a garden's design.

Originally constructed as the retirement villa of the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1435-1490), the Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion) became a Zen temple upon his death. The garden is complex, comprising two distinct sections, a pond area with a composition of rocks and plants, and a sand garden with a truncated cone – the Moon-Viewing Height – suggesting Mt Fuji; and a horizontal mound – the Sea of Silver Sand – named for its appearance by moonlight. An educational display at the garden contains good moss and weed moss to allow you to tell the difference.

After time at leisure for lunch we stroll along the charming Philosophers Way – a footpath that follows a canal lined with cherry trees. It is named for Nishida Kitaro, one of Japan's most famous philosophers, who walked this route to Kyoto University each day.

Nanzen-ji is one of the most famous Rinzai Zen temples in Japan. It was founded in 1291 by Emperor Kameyama, and was rebuilt several times after devastating fires. At the entrance to the complex one passes through the huge Imperial gate, built in 1628 by Todo Takatora, and into the complex with its series of sub-temples. We will see the *hojo*, or abbot's quarters, which is notable for both its beautiful golden screen paintings and the tranquil sand and rock garden. We will also explore the sub-temple Konchi-in which was added to the complex in 1605. (Overnight Kyoto) B

Nara - 1 night

Day 9: Friday 2 April, Kyoto – Nara

- Isui-en Garden
- Yoshiki-en Garden
- Todai-ji Temple
- Traditional Japanese bath (optional)

We leave Kyoto by coach for the ancient Japanese city of Nara, the national capital prior to Kyoto. During this period Buddhism became firmly established in Japan under the patronage of nobles who sponsored the buildings and works of art that we shall visit.

Our first destination is to the small Isui-en, a traditional Japanese garden notable for its extensive use of moss and its exquisite tea pavilion. This garden is a *kaiyushiki teien* (strolling) style design that allows the visitor to easily walk through the garden and view it from many different angles. Next door is Yoshiki-en, another historic garden named after the Yoshikigawa River that flows between the two gardens. Here we find three gardens – a pond garden, a moss garden and a tea ceremony garden.

After time at leisure for lunch we visit the impressive Todai-ji, founded in 745 by Emperor Shomu. Although rebuilt following a fire in 1709 to two-thirds of its original size it nevertheless remains the largest timber building in the world. Two seven-metre tall guardian gods flank the entrance, (known as the *nandai-mon*), to the great Buddha Hall, the Daibutsu-den, which houses the 15-metre-tall bronze statue of the great Buddha. The original casting was completed in 752, when an Indian priest stood on a special platform and symbolically opened its eyes by painting on the Buddha's eyes with a huge brush. This ceremony was performed before the then retired Emperor Shomu, his wife Komio and the reigning Empress Kogen, together with ambassadors from China, India and Persia.

The traditional Japanese-style inn we are staying in tonight provides open-air communal baths using hot spring water and affords a wonderful view of Kofuku-ji Temple's five-storey pagoda, which is illuminated at night. Tonight we dine in a traditional style at the Ryokan Asukasou, which serves Japanese *kaiseki* dishes. (Overnight Nara) BD

Note: We will leave our main luggage at the hotel in Kyoto during our 1 night stay in Nara. An overnight bag will be needed for use in Nara

Kyoto - 2 nights

Day 10: Saturday 3 April, Nara – Kyoto

- Treasures of the Nara National Museum
- Kofuku-ji Temple
- Horyu-ji Temple

Our first visit today is to the Nara National Museum noted for its collection of Buddhist art, including images, sculpture, and ceremonial articles.

A short distance away is Kofuku-ji, founded in 669. This complex contains a five-storey pagoda, a fine collection of Buddhist statues in the kokuhokan (National Treasure Building) and a 15th-century hall to the north of the pagoda. The kokuhokan is a treasure trove of early Buddhist statues and although it is not large, each piece has been carefully chosen as a masterpiece of its style and period.

The grounds of Horyu-ji Temple house the world's oldest surviving wooden structures, dating from the Asuka Period (mid 6th – beginning of 8th c.AD). Throughout the 187,000-square-metre grounds are irreplaceable cultural treasures, bequeathed across the centuries and continuing to preserve the essence of eras spanning the entire journey through Japanese history since the 7th century. Horyu-ji contains over 2,300 important cultural and historical structures and articles, including nearly 190 that have been designated as National Treasures or important Cultural Properties. In 1993 Horyu-ji was selected by UNESCO as part of the World Heritage as a unique storehouse of world Buddhist culture. Following this visit we transfer by coach to Kyoto. (Overnight Kyoto) B

Day 11: Sunday 4 April, Kyoto

- Tofuku-ji
- Heian Shrine
- Afternoon at Leisure

We begin the day with a visit to the superb Tofuku-ji Hojo, a garden designed in 1939 by Shigemori Mirei. This will be familiar to many who have read books on Japanese gardens for it combines 20th-century design with elements from Japanese tradition. Mirei implements subtle, restrained design themes such as chequerboards of stone in moss to allow the natural form and colour of maples on the surrounding hills to make full impact.

We then visit one of the newest religious sites in Kyoto, the Heian Shrine, which boasts the largest *torii* (sacred gate) in Japan and lovely gardens. The shrine was built in 1896 to commemorate the city's 1,100th anniversary and to honour its founder, Emperor Kammu and also to celebrate the culture and architecture of the city's Heian-past. It is constructed on the site of the original Heian Hall of State but is a smaller and somewhat imperfect recreation of this earlier building. Four gardens surround the main shrine buildings on the south, west, middle and east, covering an area of approximately 33,000 square metres. The gardens are designated as a national scenic spot representative of Meiji-era (1868-1912) garden design.

The afternoon is at leisure to further this city's rich culture. (Overnight Kyoto) B

Tokyo - 3 nights

Day 12: Monday 5 April, Kyoto – Tokyo

- Renge-ji
- Shisen-do
- Lunch at a local restaurant
- Daigo-ji
- Shinkansen to Tokyo

Our first visit for the day is Renge-ji – a temple is known for its garden, which reflects the beauty of seasonal

change. Autumn when the maple leaves change colour, is the best season to visit. Capturing the essence of Japanese gardens, it includes a central pond surrounded by plantings linking to the hillside beyond. Stones, bridge and plantings are all reflected on the water-surface, giving a sense of spaciousness.

The intimate gardens of Shisen-do are considered masterworks of Japanese gardens. Its street walls mask the tranquillity and beauty to be found within. Raked sand, clipped azaleas and the tree covered hillsides of Higashiyama form the main components of this garden designed by Ishikawa Jozan (1583-1672). Clipped azaleas give way to natural vegetation beyond the garden boundary but it is the close harmony between the indoor spaces of the pavilion and the garden beyond that is most striking. The veranda offers a transition between its dark interior and the light-filled garden.

Following lunch at a local restaurant, we visit Daigo-ji, a World Heritage Site that is also known as the 'Temple of the Flowers'. The Shingon Buddhist temple has several small buildings as well as a five-story pagoda that is the oldest building in Kyoto. Here we can hope to see the beautiful cherry blossom for which the garden is famed!

We then transfer to the station and take the JR Super Express shinkansen train to Tokyo. (Overnight Tokyo)
BL

Day 13: Tuesday 6 April, Tokyo

- Jiyu Gakuen School
- Tokyo National Museum
- Ekouin Nenbutsudo Temple

We begin our day with a visit to the Jiyu Gakuen School. This is a beautifully preserved building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1921, one of 12 buildings the American designed during the two years he lived in Japan. Only three of Wright's buildings survived the 20th century, and we shall be taken on a tour of this very special building.

Established in 1872, the Tokyo National Museum is the oldest and largest museum in Japan. The museum holds over 110,000 objects, which include more than 87 Japanese National Treasures and 610 Important Cultural Property holdings. The museum's collections focus on ancient Japanese art and Asian art along the Silk Road but there is also a large collection of Greco-Buddhist art.

During our travels we have encountered many traditional and historic temples and explored the variety of gardens that play such an important role in the complex. Our day concludes with a visit to the Ekouin Nenbutsudo Temple. This is a newly built modern temple in the lively heart of Tokyo. Here we will see the skill by which the architects have utilised the precious space available, and how the traditional components of a temple complex have been reinterpreted in a contemporary structure. In place of a small stroll garden using moss or stone or sand, here bamboo is used to create a green space for contemplation in this busy metropolis. (Overnight Tokyo) B

Day 14: Wednesday 7 April, Tokyo

- Former Kusuo Yasuda Residence
- Lunch at Happon Gardens
- Happon Garden
- Koishikawa-korakuen Garden

We begin today with a visit to the former Kusuo Yasuda Residence (1919), a stunning early modern interpretation of a traditional Japanese house. This elegant wooden house looks out through large windows upon a lovely garden. The house and garden have recently reopened after a period of painstaking restoration to preserve this important monument.

Meaning 'beautiful from any angle', the Happoen garden lives up to its name. Here we shall enjoy lunch at the garden's delightful restaurant, and a stroll through the gardens will reveal 200-year-old bonsai trees, a stone lantern said to have been carved 800 years ago, and a central pond.

We then visit a rare surviving 17th-century strolling garden, located in the west of the city. Koishikawa-korakuen was designed in part by Zhu Shun Shui, a Ming dynasty refugee from China, and the garden recreates both Japanese and Chinese landscapes. Here we will find waterfalls, ponds, stone lanterns, a small lake with gnarled pines and humped bridges. (Overnight Tokyo) BL

Day 15: Thursday 8 April, Depart Tokyo

- Rikugien Garden
- Ota Memorial Museum of Art
- Airport transfer for participants departing on the ASA 'designated' flight

Our first visit today is to the Rikugien garden which is all that a traditional Japanese garden should be: manicured grass, artfully contorted pine trees held up by wooden supports, wooden tea houses and moss-encrusted stone lanterns, crooked rustic bridges over gurgling streams, a lake filled with carp and tiny turtles. Built around 1700 by Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu, grand chamberlain of the fifth shogun, Rikugien means 'six poems garden' and reproduces in miniature 88 scenes from famous poems. While some traditional Japanese gardens are meant to be contemplated from a fixed spot, Rikugien is a typical example of a so-called 'strolling garden' and we will meander through the network of walking paths as we enjoy the morning.

The final visit of our tour is the Ota Memorial Museum of Art – a delightful museum specialising in Japanese Ukiyo-e, the country's famous woodblock prints. The museum has a collection of over 14000 works from all eras of this art, including masterpieces Kitagawa Utamaro, Katsushika Hokusai (including a print of The Great Wave) and Utagawa Hiroshige.

At the conclusion of the visit participants travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight will transfer by private coach to the Narita Airport for their flight home. **B**

Accommodation

15-day Cultural Garden Tour of Japan

All rooms have en suite bathroom. Rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of a Single Supplement.

- Tokyo (1 night): Hotel New Otani – Surrounded by a beautiful 400-year-old Japanese garden, situated in central Tokyo less than a 10-minute walk from 5 subway lines. www.newotani.co.jp
- Kawaguchiko (1 night): Hotel Regina Kawaguchiko – a modern hotel located on the Kawaguchi lakeside, overlooking Mt. Fuji. kawaguchiko.regina-resort.com (Japanese website only)
- Matsumoto (2 nights): Hotel Kagetsu – the city's oldest hotel, fully renovated in 2016, a short walk to the castle and historic town centre. matsumotohotel-kagetsu.com/english/
- Kanazawa (1 night): Hotel Nikko Kanazawa – a modern hotel close to the Kanazawa station and conveniently located for visiting the Kenrokuen garden and Kanazawa castle. www.hnkanazawa.jp
- Kyoto (3 nights): Hotel TBA
- Nara (1 night): Ryokan Asukasou – a traditional inn located in the heart of the city, offering Japanese-style rooms with tatami mats (all with their own private bath and W.C.). The communal baths use hot spring water. Kofukuji Temple's five-storey pagoda may be seen while soaking in the new open-air bath. Single rooms are not available at this Ryokan. www.asukasou.com Alternatively, if you prefer Western-style accommodation or prefer a single occupancy room in Nara, rooms may be arranged at the historic Hotel Nara (note: payment of an additional supplement is required). This is a newly renovated historic grand hotel a short walk from the Ryokan. www.narahotel.co.jp/eng/
- Kyoto (2 nights): Hotel TBA
- Tokyo (3 nights): Hotel New Otani – as described above. www.newotani.co.jp

Note: *Hotels are subject to change. In this instance a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

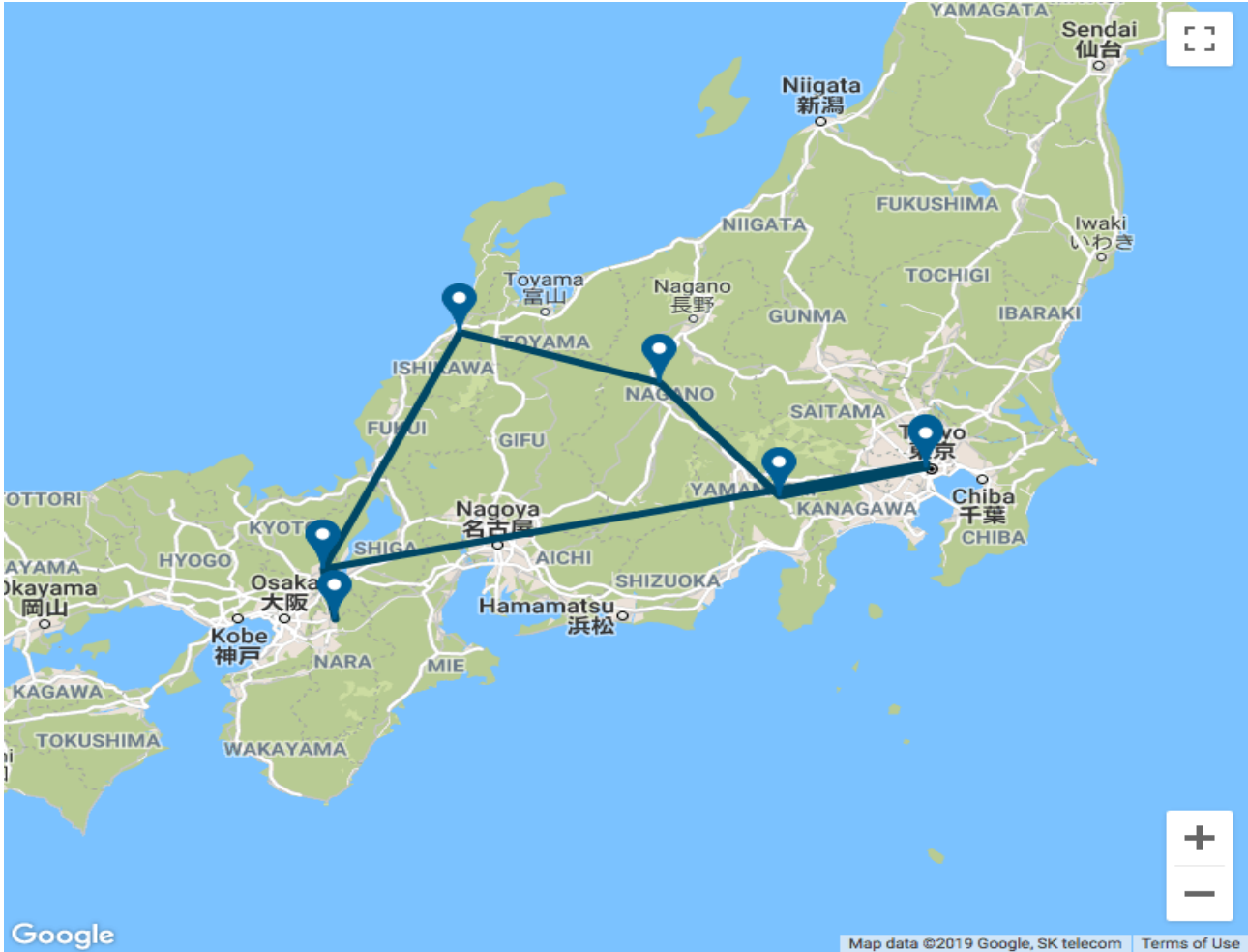
Single Supplements

Single Supplement Option 1: Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a room for single occupancy throughout the tour, except one night in Nara, where accommodation will be twin-share in Japanese-style accommodation.

Single Supplement Option 2: Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a room for single occupancy throughout the tour, including one night in a single-occupancy Western-style room at Hotel Nara.

The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take a Single Supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only – Early Bird Special: Book before 31 July 2020

AUD \$TBA Land Content Only

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement Option 1 (includes 1 night twin-share in the traditional Ryokan Asukasou, Nara)

AUD \$TBA Single Supplement Option 2 (single room throughout tour, including a western-style room at the Hotel Nara)

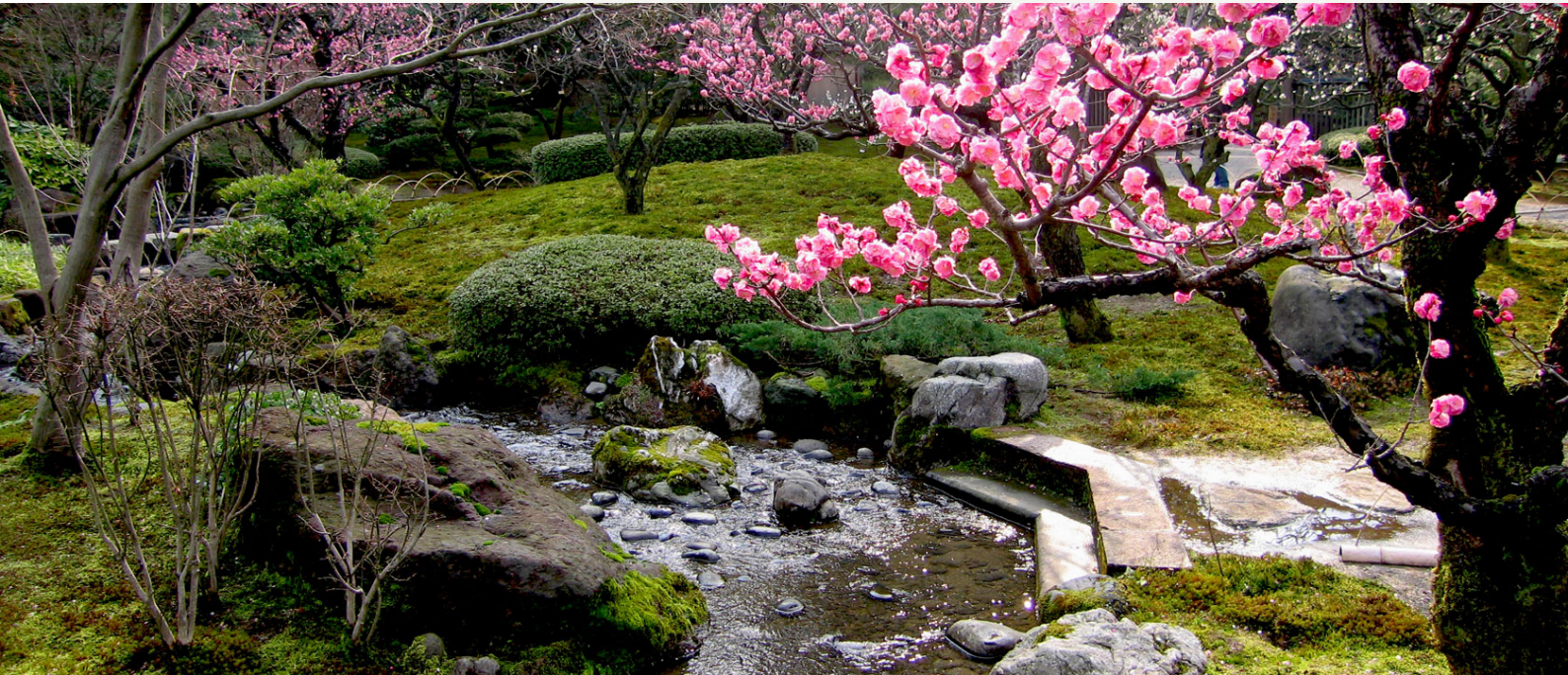
For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares and/or group airfares please contact ASA for further information.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in hotels generally of 4-star standard; 1 night in a traditional ryokan in Nara
- Buffet breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals as indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=evening meal
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach and rail as outlined in the itinerary
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on ASA's 'designated' flights
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports or train stations)
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees to all sites
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tour notes
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals.

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- International Airfare: Australia-Tokyo, Tokyo-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel Insurance.



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 15-day Cultural Garden Tour of Japan involves:

- Moderate walking and standing during site visits; walking tours may include steep slopes, flights of stairs, cobbled streets and uneven ground during garden visits.
- Rail travel between Nagano and Kanazawa (Day 5), Kanazawa and Kyoto (Day 6), and Kyoto to Tokyo (Day 12).
- No lifts at railway stations; you will be required to carry your hand-luggage up and down stairs as you change platforms with a limited time to make the train connection.
- The use of audio headsets, which amplify the voice of your guide (despite noisy surroundings). This technology also allows you to move freely during site visits without missing any information.

Other considerations:

- Hotels generally of 4-star standard, with seven hotel changes.
- Accommodation (1 night) at the Ryokan Asukasou in Nara, staying in traditional Japanese-style rooms with tatami mats (note: a limited number of Western-style rooms are available at the nearby heritage Nara Hotel).
- Visits to a number of temples. When entering temple buildings you may be required to take off your shoes.

- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

Practical Information

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Overnight Bags & Luggage Transfer

This tour involves three journeys on Japan's high-speed bullet trains. Larger suitcases are not permitted on these trains; the group's luggage will therefore be transferred by truck to the hotel. There are three occasions when a small overnight bag will be required rather than a large suitcase:

- **Tokyo - Kawaguchiko - Nagoya:** the group will travel from Tokyo to Kawaguchiko by coach and then on to Nagoya the following day. The group's main luggage will be transferred directly to the hotel in Nagoya. An overnight bag is **STRONGLY** recommended for this 1-night stay in Kawaguchiko. The group's main luggage will be securely stored at the hotel in Nagoya.
- **Nagoya - Kanazawa & Kanazawa - Kyoto:** These journeys are both by bullet train. The group's luggage will be transferred by truck from Nagoya directly to Kyoto and will be ready for the group when they arrive in Kyoto. For the one night in Kanazawa en route, an overnight bag **MUST** be used as suitcases cannot be taken on the bullet train.
- **Kyoto - Nara - Kyoto:** the group will travel from Kyoto to Nara and will return to the same Kyoto hotel the following day. An overnight bag is **STRONGLY** recommended for this 1-night stay in Nara. The group's main luggage will be securely stored at the hotel in Kyoto.

Booking Conditions

Making a Tentative Reservation before the tour price has been published

ASA INTENTION TO TRAVEL APPLICATION FORM

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD \$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From

the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD \$400.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of AUD \$500.00 is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

Or

- CANCEL your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD \$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. ASA's ability to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs, your health and safety and the health and safety of other tour members, is of paramount importance to us. For this reason the ASA Reservation Application includes a Medical Information section. As a general guideline, you must be able to accomplish each of these activities without assistance or support:

- walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions
- walk confidently on and over uneven surfaces
- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15-20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Single Supplements

Single Supplement Option 1: Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a room for single occupancy throughout the tour, except one night in Nara, where accommodation will be twin-share in Japanese-style accommodation.

Single Supplement Option 2: Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a room for single occupancy throughout the tour, including one night in a single-occupancy Western-style room at Hotel Nara.

The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take a Single Supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.



Intention to Travel Application

TOUR NAME _____

TOUR DATES _____

Booking before the tour price is available

Some ASA tours fill almost immediately. Don't miss out! You can register your 'Intention to Travel' by completing this application and returning this to ASA with a AUD\$100.00 per person deposit. Once the tour price has been published, the itinerary and ASA Reservation Application Form will be sent to you. From the time you receive the itinerary you will have two weeks to either:

- Send us a completed ASA Reservation Application Form together with an additional deposit of AUD\$400.00 per person. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation. At this time your deposit of \$500.00 AUD is subject to the tour's Booking Conditions.

OR

- Cancel your Intention to Travel in writing. ASA will refund your AUD\$100.00 per person deposit, less a \$33.00 service fee (including GST).

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____

FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____

MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

Date of birth ____ / ____ / ____ GENDER Male Female

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

Participation Criteria

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- climb at least 3 flights of stairs
- embark and disembark from ferries, buses and trains
- walk up and down steep slopes
- walk at a steady pace and no less than 1 km every 15 - 20 minutes
- organise, manage and carry your own luggage
- follow and remember tour instructions
- meet punctually at designated times and places
- administer your own medication.

Applicant's Signature _____

Dated _____

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

Payment by (please indicate): Cheque Direct Debit (see below) Credit Card (see below)

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
 Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
 Swift Code ANZBAU3M
 BSB 013-423
 Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard & Visa 2%
 American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ)

Cardholders Name

Cardholders Billing Address

Postcode

State _____ Country _____

Phone

Email

Cardholders Signature
