



**KIPLING & CLARK**  
YOUR BRIDGE TO THE EAST

500 N. CLARK STREET, SUITE 200  
CHICAGO, IL 60654

TOLL FREE 800.354.3404

LOCAL 312.836.9071

WWW.KIPLINGANDCLARK.COM



*itinerary for*

**JAPAN | TOKYO – TAKAYAMA – KYOTO/NARA | SPRING BREAK PRIVATE TOUR – 9 DAYS**

## IMPORTANT REGIONAL INFORMATION

Temperature Ranges during April/May for Tokyo/Kyoto/Takayama, Japan: Highs – mid 60s°F; Lows – low to mid 50s°F

### DAY 1: DEPARTURE

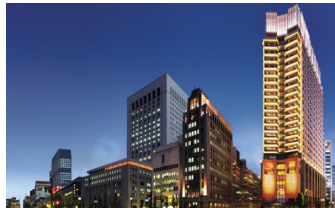
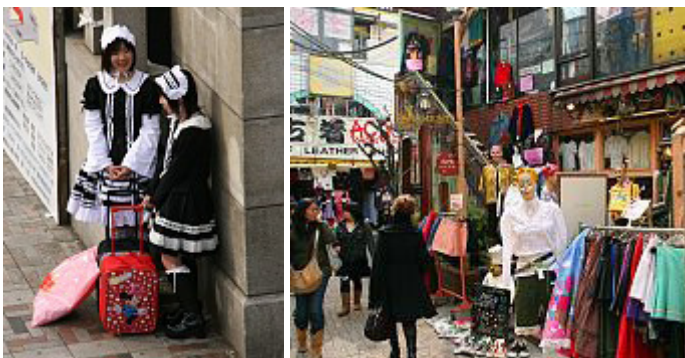
Board your departure flight to Tokyo.

### DAY 2: NARITA – TOKYO

Arrive Tokyo/Narita Airport. Please look for a **Kipling & Clark sign** in the waiting area following Baggage/Customs Immigration. Transfer by private guide & driver from NRT to **Peninsula Tokyo**.

**Options:** *Peninsula spa treatments or a nice walk or jog to nearby Hibiya Park (directly across the street from the Peninsula).*

**Accommodation:** *Peninsula Hotel Tokyo/Two Grand Deluxe Rooms*



### DAY 3: TOKYO

Early morning private visit to see private Sumo wrestling practice session – **so compelling!**

Later, your guide will meet you in the lobby at the Peninsula Hotel to embark on a **half-day Tokyo private tour**, including visit to **Imperial Palace Plaza, Meiji Shrine, Asakusa Kannon Temple with its Nakamise Shopping Arcade, possibly controversial Yasukuni Shrine, Roppongi Hills, and trendy, chic Omote sando area (and interesting side streets!),** and adjacent **Harajuku area**. All arrangements accompanied by private guide & driver.

### HARAJUKU AREA

Harajuku refers to the area from Meiji Shrine to Omote Sandō, extending to Aoyama Avenue. The focal point of Harajuku's teenage culture is Takeshita Dori (Takeshita Street) and its side streets, which are lined by a vast number of trendy shops, fashion boutiques, used clothes stores, crepe stands and fast food outlets geared towards the fashion and trend conscious teens.

Harajuku however, offers something for people of all ages, including shops, cafes and restaurants along Omotesando, a broad, tree lined avenue, sometimes referred to as Tokyo's Champs-Elysees. Omoto Sando Hills, a recently opened shopping complex along the avenue has become one of the most popular.

**Accommodation:** *Peninsula Hotel Tokyo/Two Grand Deluxe Rooms*

*continued on page 2*



## DAY 4: TOKYO – NAGOYA – TAKAYAMA VIA F CLASS BULLET TRAIN

Private transfer to Tokyo Station for F-Class Bullet Train(s), Tokyo via Nagoya to Takayama.

**Note:** Please be advised that there is no portage/baggage assistance at any railway station in Japan. Due to limited luggage storage space on F class Bullet Train compartments, we will arrange a truck transfer of your heavy baggage from Tokyo, direct to Kyoto. As you will be spending just one night in Takayama, at the **Nagase Ryokan**, you may bring carry-on bags on the Bullet Train, **Tokyo via Nagoya to Takayama for your one night.**

**Ekiben**, short for ekibento (“**station lunchbox**”) is the array of diverse, regional Japanese delicacies that one eats on the Japan bullet train transport system. These tasty, high-quality, lunchbox specialties can be purchased at all of the main railway stations, as well as on the bullet train itself (though less variety). **Ekiben** has achieved almost cult status in Japan, where you can taste the varying specialties of different regions of the country, depending on the bullet train route you are using.

*Our 7-year old daughter, Zennia, always considers the Ekiben lunchbox as the highlight of the bullet train trips! – R.L.*

– Transfer to the **Nagase Ryokan**.

– Half-day private tour of Takayama (by private guide).

*We feel that Takayama is a less pretentious, more egalitarian Japanese Alpine version of Carmel, California! – R.L.*

Set in the picturesque mountainous Hida region, **Takayama** uniquely retains its traditional Japanese culture like few other cities in Japan. Considered a “mini-Kyoto,” Takayama offers perhaps a more authentic Japanese cultural experience versus its big sister city Kyoto. With history dating back to the 15 and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Takayama is well-noted for its traditional pottery (Shibukusa-yaki).

## NAGASE RYOKAN

Located in the traditional Edo village of Takayama, Nagase Ryokan may seem a bit touristy at first, but rest assured staying here is a rewarding experience. The Nagase Ryokan has been operated by the same family for over **250 years** – only 11 rooms, most with private gardens.

Although the reception area staff speak English, the room attendants’ English is very limited. No worries, however, as you can easily communicate any of your needs. The

dinner presentation at Nagase is amazing, as well as the variety of dishes including grilled river fish, Hida beef and crab Nabe – all meals are served in the privacy of your room. Please be pre-warned that the kaiseki multi-course dinners served are very filling.

**Accommodation: Nagase Ryokan**

## DAY 5: TAKAYAMA VIA NAGOYA – KYOTO VIA F CLASS BULLET TRAIN

Your private guide will be awaiting your arrival at the lower level of Kyoto train station. Private transfer to Tawaraya Ryokan. Late afternoon/evening Kyoto City Tour (by private guide), including **Gion and Pontocho**.

Dinner in **Gion area** + Late evening walk through **Pontocho area** (one block west of Kamo River on narrow street running from Shijo-dori to Sanjo-dori). Pontocho offers a beautiful atmosphere of restaurants, tea houses and yakitori stores (grilled chicken on skewers).

## GION DISTRICT

Made up mostly of plain wooden structures located on the eastern side of the Kamo River, you will see no glitz or neon lights here. Gion is a wonderful throw-back to traditional Japanese culture, home to Kyoto’s most famous geisha district, illuminated at night with lanterns and subtle lighting. The Gion District is featured in the 2006 “Memoirs of a Geisha,” and it is still a good place to get a glimpse of these extraordinary specialists. Around 5-6 pm is said to be the peak hour and the best spot is the Ichiriki Ochaya teahouse on the corner of Hanami-koji and Shijo. Another likely spot is Gion Corner.

*Gion is a wonderful place for evening strolls and people-watching with very delicious restaurants! – R.L.*

## PONTOCHO AREA

Pontocho is ground zero for **Kyoto’s night life, restaurants, and bar scene**, with many tea houses and yakitori stores (grilled chicken on skewers) - all lined with red lanterns and very Japanese in design and aesthetics.

## TAWARAYA RYOKAN

The **Tawaraya** is perhaps the most famous and written about ryokan in all of Japan, especially if judged by the noteworthy celebrities, statesmen, and international busi-



## KIPLING & CLARK *itinerary* | JAPAN SPRING BREAK – 9 DAYS

CONTACT: 312.836.9071 or 1.800.354.3404 | [kiplingandclark.com](http://kiplingandclark.com) | [info@kiplingandclark.com](mailto:info@kiplingandclark.com)

ness CEOs that have stayed here. The **Tawaraya** experience has been described as Japanese culture in miniature, a metaphor for inner calm in the face of outer turmoil. A recent client summed up his stay here as “the essence of perfection.”

**Tawaraya’s** family ownership goes back eleven (11) generations, over 300 years. There are no rough edges at **Tawaraya**. There are almost no edges at all. But there is silence, peace, tranquility. The 18 rooms are almost always booked, and the inn almost always feels empty: past clients have stayed here more than a day without ever seeing another guest.

Yet **Tawaraya** is not ascetic. Indeed, it is almost sybaritic. The rooms are exquisitely furnished in mainly traditional Japanese style, with occasional Western-style chairs, vaguely Danish modern. Virtually all of the rooms and suites open onto private or semiprivate gardens, and they all contain large bathrooms with traditional Japanese wooden baths. In these rooms one is ministered to, catered to, attended to, responded to – everything but pandered to – with a singular combination of dignity and warmth.

Each room differs from the others in design. Views into the garden from each room are calculated so meticulously that each scene resembles a Japanese painting. Both the inner garden (where flowers are arranged in a stone basin) and the dimly lit corridors (where paper lanterns create plays of light and shadow) are truly artistic.

This is an inn that not only conveys tradition but also has been designed with a fresh, modern perspective. From the timber used in its construction to the towels, bedding, nightwear, amenities, and meals, the inn presents the best quality possible. Each of the bathrooms contains a traditional cypress tub. No worries, however, as the plumbing and flooring are newly up-dated. All of the amenities in the bathrooms are custom-made for the Tawaraya, very stylishly designed.

A night at Tawaraya is a most memorable experience because the inn exudes at every turn the aesthetic sensitivity of its 11<sup>th</sup> generation proprietress, Toshi Sato. Sixty staff tends the needs of guests of the inn’s 18 rooms. For dinner we suggest a **kaiseki dinner**. Every course is stunning visually, with magnificently composed combinations of food, seasonings, garnishes and pottery, and taste wonderful. Some ryokan are noted for the rigidity of their accommodations, insisting that guests adhere to narrow meal times or fixed menus, but **Tawaraya** prides itself on a certain flex-

ibility. Some of this may be to fulfill the Japanese tradition of honoring the guest to the utmost. In the morning, you may order a western or Japanese breakfast. (R.L.)

### *Accommodation: Tawaraya Ryokan*



## DAY 6: KYOTO & NARA THIS IS A VERY BUSY DAY!

**Full day private tour of Kyoto & Nara** to visit **Nijo Castle, Kinkakuji and Kiyomizu Temples** in Kyoto, and **Todaiji Temple (and its Great Buddha), Deer Park (deer so domesticated!) and Kasuga Shrine** with its thousands stone lanterns in Nara. (Your guide will decide on which area to visit first, Kyoto or Nara.)

All arrangements accompanied by private guide & driver

### **KINKAKUJI (GOLDEN PAVILION)**

A Zen temple, is one of the most beautiful temples in all of Kyoto. Dating back to 1397 as a new residence for the retired shogun Ashikaga Yushimitsu, the pavilion was burned down in 1950 by a fanatic monk and later reconstructed in 1955.

### **KIYOMIZU-DERA (“Pure Water Temple”)**

Is a UNESCO world heritage site and is most impressive. Founded in 780 by the Hosso Japanese Buddhist sect, we particularly enjoy the famous wooden terrace overlooking Kyoto and the busy, interesting approach (although steep!) to the temple with all sorts of shops and small eateries. Do not miss **Jishu Shrine**, dedicated to the deity of love—walk the two rocks in front of the shrine with your eyes closed to bring luck in your love life!

### **FUSHIMI SHRINE (Another option)**

Fushimi is perhaps our favorite shrine in Japan, the Fushimi Inari Taisha! (Fushimi is featured in the beginning of the film, “Memoirs of Geisha”) Dating back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the shrine includes a wandering pathway around 3 miles

*continued on page 4*



up the mountain lined with hundreds of beautiful red torii, now faded to look orange. Fushimi is the most famous of several thousand shrines dedicated to **Inari** across Japan. **Inari is the Shinto god of rice, and foxes are believed to be his messengers**, hence the many fox statues found along the pathway.

*Depending on how high you walk along the pathway, this can be a half-day trek. Much less crowded than the other shrines, Fushimi's natural surroundings seem serene and mystical. Walking up the pathway late in the afternoon or early morning are ideal times to visit this wonderful place. My family and I very much enjoy the eerie, magical ambience of Fushimi. – R.L.*

### KITSUNE UDON (“Fox Udon”)

A noodle soup topped with pieces of fried tofu, **a favorite food of foxes**, is served at small restaurants along the Fushimi hiking trail.

### TODAIJI (“Great Eastern Temple”) & NARA DEER PARK:

These are both well worth the 1 and 1/2 hour drive from Kyoto. Todaiji, was constructed in 752 as the head temple of all Japan provincial Buddhist temples. Todaiji contains Japan’s largest Buddhist statue and all represents the world’s largest wooden building.

Nara Park, adjacent to Todaiji, is a large beautiful park noted for hundreds of freely roaming deer. The deer are considered messengers of the Shinto gods and a national treasure of Nara. Nara is the capital city of Nara Prefecture in the Kansai region of Japan. Nara was the capital of Japan from 710 to 784, lending its name to the Nara period. The original city, Heijo-kyo, was modeled after the capital of Tang Dynasty China, Chang’an (present-day Xi’an—hence the Chinese influence in the temples).

The temples of Nara remained powerful even beyond the move of the political capital to Heian-kyo in 794, thus giving Nara a synonym of Nanto (lit. meaning “South Capital”) as opposed to Heian-kyo, situated in the North.

Nara is considered the second most important ancient city in all of Japan after Kyoto. **Nara has five sites listed on the UNESCO World heritage list, including the oldest wooden structure in the world (Horyuji Temple).**

### GEISHA ENTERTAINMENT & “DRESS-UP”

Special Evening Private Japanese-style dinner with contracted Geisha Entertainment arranged at a local Kyoto restaurant. Prior to dinner, the ladies in your party will be dressed up as MAIKO for experience and photo memories.

This is among the very special activities of your trip! The subtle aesthetic of the Geisha Entertainment activity is a pure reflection of Japanese cultural traditions.

**Accommodation: Hyatt Regency Kyoto/Two Deluxe Rooms**

### DAY 7: KYOTO TO TOKYO VIA F CLASS BULLET TRAIN

Please note that your baggage will be transferred by truck to the **Hotel Seiyō Ginza in Tokyo**.

Afternoon discretionary use of private guide and driver in Tokyo.

**Accommodation: Hotel Seiyō Ginza/Two Deluxe Rooms**

### DAY 8: TOKYO

Discretionary use of private guide and driver throughout the day.

### OPTIONS: PRIVATE ORIGAMI LESSON

Origami refers to the ancient Japanese art of paper folding. The origins, it is believed, were brought to Japan from China during the **Tang Dynasty, 618 -907A.D.** by Buddhist monks. Despite the Chinese origins, Origami has become an intrinsic part of the Japanese aesthetic and a wonderful cultural symbol—small, decorative, precise, works of art. The Tang Dynasty influenced Japan substantially and even today much of Japan’s intrinsic sense of service/hospitality is based on the Buddhist and Confucian traditions of ancient China. Ironically, the China of today has less sense of Confucian sensibilities than Japan – perhaps due to CCP influence since 1949. (R.L.)



### **Dinner at Princess Heart Restaurant**

This is the hottest thing for young Japanese ladies! The restaurant staff wears pink, zany maid clothes and treats customers with a complete “princess feeling”, including throne chairs and script from movies like Snow White. (“Who is the fairest...”) Believe it or not, many of the customers are in their 20’s and 30’s!!!

*Accommodation: Hotel Seiyo Ginza/Two Deluxe Rooms*

### **DAY9: DEPARTURE**

Morning free with early afternoon private transfer to NRT for **departure flight**.

— BON VOYAGE —



*For more information or to book your customized journey, please contact:*

**KIPLING & CLARK**

*[info@kiplingandclark.com](mailto:info@kiplingandclark.com)*

*312.836.9071 or 1.800.354.3404*

*[www.kiplingandclark.com](http://www.kiplingandclark.com)*