

Seto Inland Sea & Kyoto, Japan Private Tour

Each private luxury tour is custom to the wishes of each client. This itinerary is a sample. Our Sister Company, TRAVNET, may provide assistance with mileage point conversion. Do not hesitate to call Randy to create your custom tour.

Overview

For those wishing for a shorter, more relaxed, Japan cultural travel experience, we consider a Seto Inland Sea cruise, Naoshima Island, and Kyoto to be an ideal option. This itinerary begins with a three-night cruise via the 19-cabin Guntû, a luxury floating ryokan/hotel on the Seto Inland Sea. You then continue on to the art colony island of Naoshima and the culturally-rich Kyoto. With our assistance and private guides facilitating all transfers and tours, rest assured this is a seamless, stress-free journey!

JAPAN

Temperature Range

Highs: 80°F

Lows: 40°F

Area

377,864 million sq. km

145,894 million sq. miles

Population

126.4 million

Language

Japanese

Capital

Tokyo

Currency

Yen

DAY 1

Fly to Osaka

Through our sister company, premium air provider TRAVNET, we may assist with your international airfare, as well as with mileage points conversion.

DAY 2

Arrive Osaka + Private Transfer to Kyoto

Upon arrival at Kansai Airport in Osaka, you will be privately transferred to the Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto.

Aman Kyoto: Coming November 2019

With Kyoto being our favorite city in Asia, we are most excited about the 24-room Aman Kyoto opening in November 2019. The 80-acre site will include 72 acres of native forest and eight acres of traditional Japanese gardens. We are particularly impressed with the property's location in the Takagamine district, walking distance to Kinkaku-ji (Golden Temple)! We look forward to on-site

feedback from our favorite Koyo private guide, Izumi-san!

The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto

With the Hyatt Regency Kyoto having been the only western 5-star luxury hotel in Kyoto, we were excited about the February 2014 opening of the 134-room Ritz Carlton Kyoto. Living in a Mies van der Rohe high-rise in Chicago, we feel a particular affinity to the Hyatt Regency's simple, clean, architectural design. Nevertheless, the new Ritz Carlton's rectangular, low-slung property ideally situated in the Kamogawa River has definitely piqued our interest. Replicating the aesthetics of a traditional Meiji House, the design and amenities of the Ritz are quite impressive (including a French Haute Patisserie!). Though we are not big fans of the Ritz global brand (prefer AMAN/Peninsula/Mandarin/Four Seasons), we feel the new Ritz to be currently the highest quality luxury "western" hotel in Kyoto.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto

DAY 3

Shinkansen (Bullet Train) Kyoto/Onomichi + Board Guntû Cruise

Following a leisurely morning in Kyoto, you will be privately transferred to the Kyoto Station for your Shinkansen (Bullet Train) ride to Onomichi (near Hiroshima). Upon arrival, you will be met by Guntû staff, who will transfer you to the port to board the Guntû Cruise, a recently inaugurated 19-room, 266-foot-long floating ryokan/hotel that sails along the Seto Inland Sea.

Guntû Cruise

The recently inaugurated 19-room, 266-foot-long floating ryokan/hotel sails along the Seto Inland Sea. We feel the Guntû is best described as a cross between a traditional Japanese ryokan and a luxury yacht. The three-decker boat, designed by architect Yasushi Horibe, is named after little blue crabs that sometimes end up in fishing nets. Affectionally called guntû, the crabs are flavorful when added to soups and stews. Excursion options include morning walks along beautiful shorelines, through port towns and learning from local fisherman. Guntû features a wide range of onboard facilities including an observation deck, a lounge, a gym, a treatment room, a communal bath, and a sauna. A highlight of Guntû is the dining. Chef Kenzo Sato from Tokyo's Shigeyoshi restaurant considers the weather, guest preferences and mood when creating the menu. Local and seasonal ingredients are used with a focus on their flavor, simplicity and beauty. Dining areas are comprised of a tea room, a cocktail bar/café, a sushi bar, and a char-grill counter.

Meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodations: Guntû Cruise

DAY 4 – 5

Guntû Cruise

Enjoy the sailing along the Seto Inland Sea aboard the Guntû with great food, amenities, and your private terrace suite with an open-air bath!

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodations: Guntû Cruise

DAY 6

Disembark Guntû Cruise + Shinkansen (Bullet Train) Onomichi/Okayama + Ferry to Naoshima

Following breakfast, you will disembark the Guntû Cruise and will be transferred to the Onomichi station for your Shinkansen (Bullet Train) to Okayama.

Upon arrival, you will be privately transferred to the ferry to Naoshima Island, stopping en route at Korakuen Garden. Once landed on the island, you will be privately transferred to the Benesse House Hotel, a very special place on these art-centric Japanese islands.

Benesse House Hotel Oval

The central lodging facility within “Benesse Art Site Naoshima” consists of four buildings: Museum (10 rooms) allows close contact with the artworks both in a public exhibition space and in each guestroom; Oval (six rooms – our favorite!), offers beautiful panoramic views of the Seto Inland Sea and is connected to the museum by a monorail; Park (41 rooms) looks out to the green lawn with open-air artworks to the ocean and the mountains of Shikoku on the far shore, and contains an exclusive lounge, a shop, and Spa; and Beach

(eight suites), located on the shoreline with suites only, provides beautiful views of the Seto Inland Sea. The Benesse House spa, La Villa, offers a variety of rejuvenating spa treatments.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Benesse House Hotel Oval

DAY 7

Full-Day Naoshima Private Tour + Ferry to Mainland + Shinkansen (Bullet Train) to Kyoto

Today's full-day private tour of Naoshima will include various art installations around the island, as well as special access to the Benesse Museum. The island's relatively remote, picturesque, location, coupled with its array of world-class contemporary art and architecture makes for a truly unique stopover destination. Though Naoshima welcomes a greater number of foreigners every year, it has thankfully been missing from the Japan mass tourism travel circuit.

Following your tour, you will take the ferry back to the mainland, where you will be privately transferred to the train station for your onward journey back to Kyoto. Upon arrival, you will be privately transferred to the Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto

DAY 8

Full-Day Kyoto Private Tour

Your private tour today will include the Philosopher's Walk, Fushimi Shrine (perhaps our favorite shrine in Kyoto!), Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavillion), Kiyomizu-dera (Pure Water Temple), lunch at our Lynch family-favorite noodle shop, and a private tea ceremony!

Meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodations: Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto

DAY 9

Kyoto Private Tour + Nara Excursion

Today, you will continue touring Kyoto with your private guide including an appointment at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Saiho-ji Gardens, and Heian Jingu Shrine and Gardens, and Gekkeikan Ōkura Sake Museum (A fascinating history!).

In the afternoon, you will take an excursion 1.5-hours outside Kyoto to Nara Deer Park at Tōdai-ji (Great Eastern Temple). Todaiji was constructed in 752 as the head temple of all Japan provincial Buddhist temples and is also Japan's largest wooden building. Nara Park is a large and beautiful park noted for hundreds of freely roaming deer, considered messengers of the Shinto gods and a national treasure.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations: Aman Kyoto or The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto



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KIPLINGANDCLARK.COM 500 NORTH CLARK STREET, SUITE 200 CHICAGO, IL 60654 INFO@KIPLINGANDCLARK.COM
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DAY 10

Fly Osaka/Home

Following breakfast, you will be privately transferred to Kansai Airport in Osaka for your return flight home.

Meals: Breakfast