

Kumano Kodo

Walk and Tour



Kumano Sanzan (Three Grand Shrines of Kumano)

The Kii Peninsula, south of Kyoto and Osaka, is a remote, spiritual region home to the Kumano Sanzan (Three Grand Shrines of Kumano). Since the 11th century, emperors have journeyed there via the Kumano Kodo trails. This walk follows the Nakahechi route through forests and villages to the Nachi Grand Shrine. This 14-day Japan tour offers a unique blend of cultural heritage, scenic walking, and city exploration.

- ✓ Begin in **Osaka** exploring its vibrant food scene and iconic landmarks.
- ✓ Journey to **Mount Koya** for a spiritual stay in a Buddhist temple and traditional vegetarian cuisine.
- ✓ Experience farm life in **Kii-Tanabe** before embarking on a four-day hike along the historic **Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail** with stays in traditional guesthouses and onsen ryokans.
- ✓ Visit coastal **Kii-Katsuura**'s lively fish market before traveling to Kyoto for legendary temples, a tea ceremony, and a geisha district tour.
- ✓ Explore **Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park** and **Miyajima Island** with its stunning shrines and **Mt. Misen** views.
- ✓ The trip concludes with two leisure days in **Tokyo** to explore its famous sights and vibrant neighbourhoods.

What's Included

Departure and Return Location

Osaka and Tokyo

Price includes

- ✓ Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- ✓ Train travel from Osaka to Mt Koya (Day 2) and Kii-Katsuura to Kyoto (Day 8)
- ✓ Transportation by bus from Mount Koya to Takijiri (Day 3) and as needed during the walk
- ✓ Daily luggage transfer from Takahara to Kii-Katsuura – 1 piece of luggage per person
- ✓ Detailed day to day itinerary and walking directions along with Topographical maps
- ✓ Emergency support from our team in Kyoto by telephone
- ✓ Entrance fees and transportation during tours
- ✓ Return ferry tickets between Hiroshima and Miyajima
- ✓ Getaway Trekking guide for walk and tour – Wilderness first aid qualified
- ✓ Tipping
- ✓ **FREE** Getaway Trekking walking shirt.

Price excludes

- ✗ Flights to and from Japan
- ✗ Travel insurance and Visa expenses
- ✗ Airport transfers to and from hotels on Day 1 and Day 14
- ✗ Walk – Any drinks with meals, snacks and miscellaneous items of personal expenditure
- ✗ Tour – Lunch, Dinner. Drinks with meals, snacks and miscellaneous items of personal expenditure.
- ✗ Luggage Transfer greater than 1 piece of luggage per person along the Kumano Kodo trail
- ✗ Lunch and dinner in Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Tokyo

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in Osaka

Your tour begins with your arrival at your hotel in Osaka. Airport transfers are not included, but whether you are flying into Osaka Kansai Airport or arriving by train from Tokyo, we will try and arrange these as a group, so we will send out some flight options that will best suit the group.

After check in, we can begin our discovery of the city of Osaka – known as the food capital of western Japan.

Osaka gets its title in part from the fantastic Dotonbori area in the south of the city. Countless restaurants line the Dotonbori-gawa River offering dinner with views.

Historically, the city prospered as a crucial location for water transportation, before developing into a sprawling metropolis now second only to Tokyo in population size and density.

The city is home to Osaka-jo – a symbolic castle, re-built to its grand size after repeated fires.

Osaka also boasts Tenjinbashi-suji Shotengai, the longest covered shopping arcade in Japan as well as the Umeda underground mall – a vast network of restaurants and shops.

Tenpo-zan Harbor Village is also a huge draw, with the excellent Kaiyukan, which is one of the biggest aquariums in the world, as well as an enormous 110 metre Ferris-wheel and shopping mall.

Check in at Monterey Osaka or similar

A 5-minute walk from JR Osaka Train Station (Sakura-bashi Exit), Hotel Monterey Osaka offers European-style rooms with free Wi-Fi. It features French and Japanese cuisine, and a 24-hour front desk.

Hotel Monterey Osaka is a 15-minute walk from the floating garden at Umeda Sky Building and a 10-minute walk from Grand Front Osaka.

Via train, it is a 15-minute ride from the iconic Osaka Castle, while Universal Studios Japan is a 20-minute train ride away.

Namba and Shinsaibashi area are within a 15-minute subway ride away.

Day 2 Mount Koya

After breakfast we checkout and arrange for our luggage to be transferred to Takahara and the start of our walk section.

Today we will need to wear our walking gear and pack minimal overnight requirements in our day packs.

We will not have access to our main luggage for 1 night.

Today you will travel by train along the scenic Nankai Railway Line to Mount Koya, a bowl-shaped valley filled with cedars high in the mountains of the Kii Peninsula. (Approximately 2.5 hrs)

Since the 9th century Mount Koya has been a place of religious devotion and ceremony. Today there are more than 100 monasteries, many of which have Shukubo (Pilgrims lodging). We stay in one of the elegant temples and dine on shojin-ryori (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine).

We walk through the vast Okuno-in cemetery, with thousands of graves and memorials to feudal lords and other past luminaries.

This morning you will send ahead your main luggage from Osaka to Takahara, and travel with a daypack with overnight essentials for tonight.

- Accommodation: Shukubo (Pilgrims Lodging)
- Meals Included: Breakfast, Dinner



Day 3 Travel to Kii-Tanabe

Our day today starts with bus travel from Mount Koya to Kii Tanabe. (Approximately 4 Hrs)

We will have lunch at a local restaurant in Kii-Tanabe, before taking a bus ride to our accommodation.

Our accommodation here is in an old converted school in an orange growing area.

We will not be doing any walking today, instead we will enjoy a local farm/fruit picking experience or a cooking experience.

Our luggage will be collected from here and transferred for us every day of our walk (1 piece per person).

- Accommodation: Farm stay in Kii Tanabe
- Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 4 Walk Day 1 – Hike from Takijiri to Chikatsuyu/Nonaka

Today we will be walking 2 sections of the Kumano Kodo. After your Japanese breakfast, you leave your inn and travel by taxi for forty minutes to Takijiri. This is where your walk on the Nakahechi portion of the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage route begins.

Section 1:

From Takijiri the path climbs steadily to the ridge-top village of Takahara, and takes around two hours.

Walking distance: 4.5km approx 2hrs
Ascent: 370m

Section 2:

Follow the trail as it winds through small settlements and peaceful countryside. You pass several oji shrines before finally descending to the village of Chikatsuyu. The paths are clearly defined, and flagstones have been laid in some places to make the climbs easier. Arrive in Chikatsuyu in time to relax before dinner at a family-run guesthouse. Our group will be accommodated in 2 guest houses that are in similar areas.

Walking distance: 10km approx 4-5hrs
Ascent: 480m Descent: 520m

- Accommodation: Guesthouse Chikatsuyu and Guesthouse Agai
- Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 5 Walk Day 2 – Hike from Chikatsuyu to Hongu

We'll begin with a local bus ride departing from Chikatsuyu. From Chikatsuyu, the trail continues through the mountains to Hongu.

The trail passes through small villages and forest trails over the Kii Mountains to the Kumano shrine at Hongu, one of the three 'Grand Shrines of Kumano'.

At the heart of these sacred mountains, Kumano was said to be the entrance to the land of Yomi, the 'other world' which spirits travelled to in Japanese mythology.

From the Kumano shrine at Hongu, a short bus ride brings you to Yunomine Onsen, one of the oldest natural hot spring villages in Japan, or to Kawayu Onsen famous for the thermal water bubbling to the surface of the crystal-clear river. Enjoy a relaxing soak in a Japanese bath before or after your delicious, multi-course dinner.

Walking distance: 15km

Time required: Approx 7hrs, requiring an early start
Ascent: 820m Descent: 1140m

- Accommodation: Onsen Ryokan (Hot-spring Travellers Inn)
- Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 6 Walk Day 3 – Ukegawa to Koguchi

Our walk today begins with a short bus ride to Ukegawa on the banks of the Kumano River. From Ukegawa, you start on the Kogumotorigoe path, which heads up to the Kogumotorigoe Pass before descending to the remote village of Koguchi. The trail is not difficult and should take you about 4 hours.

Walking distance: 12.4km approx 4hrs
Ascent: 520m Descent: 500m

- Accommodation: Yunomineso
- Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 7 Walk Day 4 – Walk Koguchi to Nachi – Overnight in Kii-Katsuura

The final section of the trail takes you from Koguchi up to the Ogumotorigoe Pass with a glimpse of the Pacific Ocean.

It then descends to Nachi-san, the location of Nachi Taisha Grand Shrine, one of the three Grand Shrines of Kumano and Nachi-taki waterfall.

Stay overnight either in the small village of Nachi-san close to the shrine or take a local bus for the twenty-minute ride to the port town of Kii-Katsuura with wonderful views over the island-studded bay.

Enjoy dinner and breakfast served by your hosts at your accommodation.

Walking distance: 15.1km

Ascent: 980m **Descent:** 920m

- **Accommodation:** Japanese-style Onsen Ryokan or Hotel
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 8 Kii-Katsuura and onwards by train to Kyoto

Kii-Katsuura is an active fishing port and has a lively early-morning fish market.

Enjoy the views out over the island-studded bay. There are intriguing backstreets and a traditional covered shopping arcade to explore, too.

It is also possible to visit Hayatama Shrine, one of the three grand Shrines of Kumano.

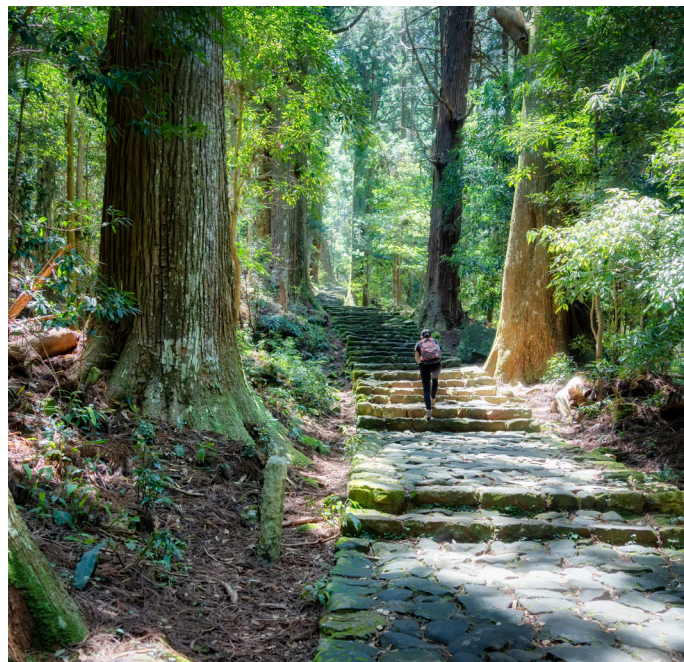
We provide train tickets for you to board a train at lunchtime, travelling back around the Kii Peninsula and arriving in Kyoto mid to late afternoon.

The ancient former capital of Japan, Kyoto is a treasure trove of historic monuments, elegant green spaces, traditional wooden houses, and omnipresent temples, pagodas, and shrines. The city was home to Japan's Emperors from 794 until 1869. Despite battles and fire, the city was not heavily targeted by air raids in World War II, so that even today centuries-old temples, glittering shrines, and resplendent palaces survive in the city today.

Walking distance: 10km approx 4-5hrs

Ascent: 480m **Descent:** 520m

- **Accommodation:** Hotel Keihan Kyoto or similar
- **Meals Included:** Breakfast



Day 9 Kyoto

After breakfast we meet our guide for an early start for our Kyoto tour.

Explore the main sights of Kyoto on a guided tour of the 10,000 torii gates at Fushimi-Inari Shrine, Golden Temple (aka Kinkakuji), and the Bamboo Forrest in Arashiyama.

Before dinner we will take part in a traditional tea-drinking ceremony.

Get the chance to sample matcha tea at its best. The Tea Master will guide you throughout, showing and explaining every step of the way. Throughout the ceremony you will be taught the fine art of drinking matcha tea and learn about the importance of the ceremony.

After dinner, we will meet for our Geisha walking tour.

Starting from the Minamiza Theater in Gion, we first head to Hanamikoji, known as the geisha district.

In this area, you will not only enjoy the traditional streets, but also learn the mysterious rules and trivia of geisha culture from your guide.

If you're lucky, you may even see a real Geisha.

Next, you will see a shrine for matchmaking and a beautiful Buddhist pagoda, which is illuminated at night, creating an even more stunning sight.

Your guide will take your picture there if you want.

You will then continue to explore hidden spots and pathways and end the tour with a visit to a shrine that is over 1000 years old.

We will return to our Kyoto accommodation tonight.

Walking distance: 15.1km

Ascent: 980m **Descent:** 920m

- **Meals Included:** Breakfast

Day 10 Hiroshima

After breakfast, we checkout of our hotel and travel by train to Hiroshima. Approximately 2 hours on the Shinkansen line.

Check in at Rihga Royal Hiroshima – 2 nights

Location: This hotel is located just 200 metres from the center of Hiroshima.

Today we have an afternoon Tour through The Hiroshima Memorial Peace Park

Join an expert-led walking tour to explore Hiroshima's rich history, cultural heritage, and the impact of the atomic bombing. This immersive experience covers key landmarks, personal stories, and the city's inspiring journey toward peace and reconstruction.

Visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, See the iconic Atomic Bomb Dome, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Pay tribute to the lives lost in 1945 at the Cenotaph for A-bomb Victims and the Flame of Peace.

Ring the Peace Bell as a symbol of hope and world peace.

Children's Peace Monument: Learn the story of Sadako Sasaki and the thousand paper cranes.

Hiroshima's Post-war Reconstruction: Understand the city's remarkable recovery and modernization.

Local Culture & Hidden Gems: Explore Hiroshima's traditions, food, and contemporary landmarks. Understand the city's remarkable recovery and modernization after the war.

The remainder of the day can be used to explore the Peace Memorial Museum or other city sights.

Back to Rihga Royal Hotel for tonight's accommodation.

- Accommodation: Rihga Royal Hotel
- Meals Included: Breakfast

Day 11 Miyajima

Embark on a full-day tour of Miyajima and explore the island's beautiful shrines and temples, abundant nature, and local delicacies. Take in the beauty of the entire island on the ropeway to the top of Mt. Misen and the hike to the summit.

Start your day at Hiroshima Station, where you will meet your guide. Travel by train and ferry to Miyajima, and learn about the island's history and culture from your guide.

Visit the Senjokaku Pavilion, a shrine whose construction was never completed and still remains unfinished to this day. Next, make your way to the Itsukushima Shrine. Your guide will provide insights about Shintoism, Japan's indigenous religion, and the history of the shrine.

As you make your way through the temple, observe the different worship halls, the unique architecture of the



Miyajima Island

"floating shrine," and the iconic O-torii gate located in the Seto Inland Sea.

Your guide will then lead you on a walk to the Daisho-in temple, a prestigious Shingon Buddhist temple located not too far from Itsukushima Shrine. Throughout the temple grounds you will be able to observe a myriad of Buddhist figures, with different statues greeting you anywhere you go.

Next, visit the Omotesando Shopping Street, lined with multiple shops and restaurants. Here, you will enjoy around two hours of free time in which you will be able to have lunch and purchase souvenirs or other goods.

The last main destination of the tour is Mount Misen, the highest point of Miyajima. Together with your guide, you will ride the Miyajima Ropeway all the way to the top of the mountain. Inside the cabin of the ropeway, you will be able to enjoy marvelous aerial views of the island.

Once at the top, you will have the option of staying behind at the Shishiiwa Observatory next to the ropeway station or making the trek to the Mt. Misen Observatory at the summit. This hike is a steep and arduous walk towards the summit, but the magnificent view from the top with no obstructions whatsoever is most certainly worth it.

Take the ropeway on the way down and make your way back to the pier. On this final walk, there will be opportunities for some last-minute souvenir purchases, as well as photos with local wild deer.

A Miyajima trip is not complete without walking up to the O-torii gate during low-tide. However, due to how much the tide can vary from one day to another, your tour guide will do their best to schedule a guided walk towards the gate at the most appropriate moment during the tour.

- Accommodation: Rihga Royal Hotel
- Meals Included: Breakfast

Day 12 Tokyo

After checking out of our accommodation, we travel to Tokyo on the Shinkansen line. Approximately 4 hours. Keep your camera handy as if the skies are clear we may get some fabulous views of Mt Fuji.

Check in at Shibuya Excel Hotel Tokyu - 2 nights

Location: This hotel warmly welcomes guests in Tokyo. Incredible views of the iconic crossing "scramble" are a feature of this hotel.

The remainder of the day is free time.

Don't forget to join in the Shibuya crossing scramble!

- Accommodation: Shibuya Excel Hotel
- Meals Included: Breakfast

Day 13 Tokyo

Today is a day of leisure.

Either enjoy the sights of Shibuya or take a short train ride to enjoy sight-seeing in the nation's capital, Tokyo.

Suggestions:

Jump on the Hop on/Hop off bus
Toyko Skytree (bookings required)
Shibuya Sky (bookings required)
Meiji Jingu Shrine & Gardens
Street go carting (bookings required)
Fish Market tours (bookings required)

- Accommodation: Shibuya Excel Hotel
- Meals Included: Breakfast

Day 14 Home

Check out of hotel. We make our way to the airport and say goodbye to those of us that are travelling further.

- Meals Included: Breakfast

