

McDermott's

Coaches ★ Specialty tours and charters

Japan Autumn Colours & Highlights

14 Days / 13 Nights

Tour Departs Sunday 28 October - Saturday 10 November, 2018

Tour Cost from: \$7,999.00 per person Twin Share (Single Supplement \$1450.00)

Inclusive Taxes - Airport taxes/levies are subject to change without notice until fully ticketed

Tour Price based on Minimum 15 paying passengers

Tour Price valid for travel 2018 subject to re-costing and is subject to International Currency Fluctuations until fully ticketed.

Please note that itinerary is subject to change without notice.



The Itinerary

Day 1. Sunday 28 Oct 2018: Launceston - Tokyo

Lunch & in-flight refreshments

This morning after pick up from your home we are transferred to the Launceston Airport for our departure to Japan via Melbourne. Pick up times to be advised.

Flight Details: QF 2280 departs Launceston 7.00 am - arriving Melbourne 8.15 am

QF 79 departs Melbourne 10.35 am - arriving Tokyo (Narita) 7.00 pm

We arrive in Tokyo after our flight from Australia. On arrival we transfer to our hotel for check in.

Overnight Tokyo: Otani Inn Hotel

Day 2. Monday 29 Oct 2018: Tokyo Highlights

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we **explore Tokyo's modern and traditional sides**. We travel through Tokyo's city centre where we'll get a taste for Tokyo's contrasting mix of ancient tradition and modern glamour. See the Imperial Palace Plaza, with its manicured grounds, then check out art deco-style National Diet Building and the sprawling State Guest House. Moving on we pass through the commercial district of Ginza, one of Tokyo's top spots for entertainment, shopping and eating, and the neon-lit Akihabara, where electronics vendors ply their wares. We arrive at the Asakusa neighbourhood, home to many of Tokyo's most famous temples and shrines. Stop by **Asakusa's Senso-ji temple**, the city's oldest Buddhist religious centre, where we will admire its **giant Thunder Gate** and the striking five-story pagoda. On our way up to the temple we make time to browse the food stands and souvenir vendors lining the alley just out front. This afternoon we experience one of Tokyo's newest and biggest attractions, the **Tokyo Skytree**. This 2,080-foot (634m) tower has been designated the world's tallest. Ascend to the Skytree's Tembo Deck, reaching an altitude of 1,148 feet (350m) to enjoy an incredible bird's-eye view of this sprawling urban centre.

Optional feel free to stop by the Tembo Deck's on-site restaurant, café and shop, or purchase an optional extension to climb even higher up this giant monument to the Tembo Galleria. This upper viewing deck offers hyperbole-worthy views of Tokyo from a height of 1,476 feet (450m).

Later in the afternoon we travel back to our hotel to rest up before dinner.

Overnight Tokyo: Otani Inn Hotel

McDermott's Coaches

Phone: 03 6330 3717 Email: sales@mcdermotts.com.au Address: 35 Legana Park Drive, Legana, TAS 7277

Day 3. Tues 30 Oct 2018: Nikko National Park

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we travel up to **experience the colours and natural beauty of the Nikko National Park**. During Fall, Nikko's landscape transforms into a painting of red and gold. We are able to feast our eyes upon breathtaking countryside, sacred shrines and stunning temples as we explore this region with our accomplished guide. Visit the amazing **Toshogu Shrine**, a UNESCO World Heritage site dedicated to Shinto worship, and hear about the structure's fascinating history. **Taiyuinbyo** is the **mausoleum** of the third Tokugawa shogun, Lemitsu, the grandson of Leyasu. Lemitsu's lavish mausoleum complex resembles the nearby Toshogu Shrine in its layout and architecture, but it was intentionally built somewhat more modest than the Toshogu, due to Lemitsu's deep respect for his grandfather. We also absorb the natural splendour of **Lake Chuzenji and Kegon Falls**. Located at an altitude of 1,269 meters, Chuzenji Lake is the highest natural lake in Japan. We take the view of Mt. Nikko and Mt. Nantaisan, as well as the colourful decorative foliage of the abundant trees that decorate the lake. **The Kegon Waterfall** is one of Japan's three greatest waterfalls alongside Fukuroda Falls and Nachi Falls. The cascade that falls from a height of 97 meters is a truly impressive sight. There is a pay elevator that will take guests close to the waterfall. As a famous tourist spot, "**Nikko Irohazaka**" has been picked as one of "Japan's 100 Roads." The colour of the mountains changes subtly on different altitudes, so you can see where the leaves are turning into red. Although the location is stunning to behold, the **panoramic view from Akechidaira is simply breathtaking**. After leaving this amazing National Park we travel across to the city of Takasaki where we check into our hotel before dinner.

Overnight Takasaki: Apa Hotel

Day 4. Wed 31 Oct 2018: Takasaki - Jigokudani Monkey Park - Matsumoto

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we travel across to Matsumoto via Chikuma and the Jigokudani Monkey Park. Near Chikuma is The Mori Shogunzukurakofun, a mountaintop keyhole tomb dating from near the end of the Kofun period (250 - 538 AD) is one of the latest of its type in eastern Japan. We then **arrive at the Jigokudani Monkey Park** which offers visitors the unique experience of seeing wild monkeys bathing in a natural hot spring. The park is inhabited by Japanese Macaques, which are also known as **Snow Monkeys**. It is located in the monkey's natural habitat, in the forests of the Jigokudani Valley in Yamanouchi. After our visit we travel down into Matsumoto arriving at the **Matsumoto Castle** which is one of the most complete and beautiful among Japan's original castles. It is a "hirajiro" - a castle built on plains rather than on a hill or mountain. Matsumoto Castle is unique for having both a secondary donjon and a turret adjoined to its main keep. The castle structures, in combination with their characteristic black wainscoting, give off an air of grandeur and poise. With its contrasting black and white structure, it is a national treasure. Looking over the moat, we will be able to see the beautiful reflection of the castle with blazing red leaves on the surface of the water. Our next stop is the **Nawate Dori**, a small alley with toy-like old fashion stores selling handicrafts to flowers and fruits. We may even find some antiques there as well. Late afternoon we check into our hotel before dinner.

Overnight Matsumoto: Mystays Hotel

Day 5. Thurs 1 Nov 2018: Matsumoto - Takayama - Kanazawa

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we travel across to Takayama then onto the coastal city of Kanazawa. After arriving in Takayama we visit **The Takayama Jinya**, former government house of Takayama. Because of its valuable timber resources, the Hida Region around Takayama was put under direct control of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1692. The Takayama Jinya served as the local government office headed by the officials dispatched from Edo (present day Tokyo). The building complex was in official use until 1969, and is now open to the public as a museum. Beside the main building stands a large storehouse built in the 1600s. Known as the biggest traditional rice storehouse in Japan, it now functions as a museum, showcasing belongings and official documents of past feudal lords, old maps of the Hida Region and historic town plans. Our next stop is the **Hida Folk Village**, an open air museum exhibiting over 30 traditional houses from the Hida region, the mountainous district of Gifu Prefecture around Takayama. The houses were built during the Edo Period (1603 - 1867) and were relocated from their original locations to create the museum in 1971. We then take a **walk along Sannomachi Street**. **Takayama's old town** has been beautifully preserved, with many buildings and whole streets of houses dating from the Edo Period (1600-1868), when the city thrived as a wealthy town of merchants. The southern half of the old town, especially the Sannomachi Street, survives in a particularly pretty state with many old homes, shops, coffee houses and sake breweries, some of which have been in business for centuries. Early afternoon we continue our drive across to the western coastal city of Kanazawa. We arrive in the **Higashi Chaya District or "Old Town"**. A chaya "lit tea-house" is an exclusive type of restaurant where guests are entertained by geisha who perform song and dance. During the Edo Period, chaya were found in designated entertainment districts, usually just outside the city limits. Kanazawa has three, well preserved chaya districts, Higashi Chayagai (Eastern Chaya District), Nishi Chayagai (Western Chaya District) and Kazuemachi. Of the three districts, the Higashi Chaya District is the largest and by far the most interesting. Two chaya, the Shima Teahouse and Kaikaro Teahouse, are open to the public. Other buildings along the central street now house cafes and shops. One of the shops, Hakuza, sells gold leaf products, a specialty of Kanazawa, and displays a tea ceremony room which is completely covered in gold leaf. Late afternoon we check into our hotel before dinner.

Overnight Kanazawa: Mystays Hotel

Day 6. Fri 2 Nov 2018: Kanazawa

Breakfast & Dinner

This morning we **visit the Omi-cho Market** which was established about the middle of the 18th century. Since then, it has been supporting the gastronomic culture of Kanazawa for more than 280 years. There are as many as 170 stores including a large number of fish stores that sell fresh fish and seafood caught in the Sea of Japan, vegetable stores that sell unique Kaga vegetables, fruit stores, dried food and marine product stores, grocery stores, and clothing stores besides restaurants. Our next stop is the **stunning Kenrokuen Garden**, one of Japan's "Three Most Beautiful Gardens". Covering 11.5 hectares and sitting next door to Kanazawa Castle, it has been maintained by the Maeda family who ruled the Kaga Clan (the present Ishikawa and Toyama areas) in feudal times, from generation to generation. From its scale and beauty, it is regarded as one of the most beautiful feudal lords' gardens in Japan. It produces colourful red and yellow leaves in autumn. Besides, visitors will have a glorious view of seasonal natural beauty including the snow-covered landscape with yukitsuri (literally means snow hanging), which is performed for approximately one month from November 1 every year. This is a method of protecting the branches of the pine trees in the garden with ropes attached in a conical array to the trees in order to prevent the branches from breaking.

Leaving the garden we move onto the **Kanazawa Castle** where the Maeda family resided and governed the Kaga Clan (the present Ishikawa and Toyama areas) for more than 280 years. Henceforth the castle tower was burned down by a fire in the past and has not been rebuilt, but other fortress buildings were reconstructed repeatedly.

Day 6. Continued

The Ishikawamon Gate, which was rebuilt in 1788, and the Sanjikken Nagaya (50-yard-long warehouse), which was rebuilt in 1858, still remain. The place was repaired in 1996, and the Hishiyagura (diamond-shaped turret), Gojikken Nagaya (90-yard-long warehouse), and Hashizumemon Tsuzuki Yagura (turret protecting the nearby gate) were restored and the park opened. Our last stop for the day is **The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art**, Kanazawa as a new-style art museum different in image from conventional art museums was opened in October 2004. Some of the highlights of the museum are commissioned works, i.e., arts integrated with the building structure. These arts include a work that enables visitors to feel as if they stand on the bottom of a swimming pool, the surface of a wall coloured with flowers gathered from the suburbs of Kanazawa, and a room with an opening on the ceiling through which visitors can see the changes of the sky. Late afternoon we return to our hotel to relax and refresh before dinner.

Overnight Kanazawa: Mystays Hotel

Day 7. Sat 3 Nov 2018: Kanazawa - Shirakawa - Gero - Nagoya

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we depart the west coast and make our way down to Nagoya via the Shirakawa Village and Gero. **The Shirakawa Village**, site of **The Shirakawa-go** that line the Shogawa River Valley in the remote mountains that span from Gifu to Toyama Provinces. Declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1995, they are famous for their traditional gassho-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old. Gassho-zukuri means “constructed like hands in prayer”, as the farmhouses’ steep thatched roofs resemble the hands of Buddhist monks pressed together in prayer. The architectural style developed over many generations and is designed to withstand the large amounts of heavy snow that falls in the region during winter. The roofs, made without nails, provided a large attic space used for cultivating silkworms. Around midday we arrive in **Gero** where at the western end of town along a mountain slope stands **Onsenji Temple** which is dedicated to a Buddhist saint who, according to legend, prayed for 1000 days to bring forth spring water to Kinosaki. Onsenji’s main treasure is a two-meter-tall, eleven-headed Kannon Buddha which is displayed to the public in its entirety only once every 33 years for a period of three years (*next opportunity: April 23, 2018 to April 24, 2021*). Near the temple’s main hall stands the **Kinosaki Art Museum**, a small, interesting museum of historic artefacts and temple treasures. Gero is a small town by the crystal clear Hida River in a dramatic mountainous setting and has been known for its hot springs since the 10th century and is one of Japan’s “Three Famous Springs”. Gero is also famous for its beautiful autumn colours. Leaving Gero we continue down into Nagoya where we check into our hotel before dinner.

Overnight Nagoya: Kokusai Hotel

Day 8. Sun 4 Nov 2018: Nagoya - Kyoto

Breakfast & Dinner

This morning we visit some of the most **spectacular parks/gardens in Nagoya** beginning with **Tokugawa-en, a traditional Japanese garden** that was used as a retirement villa for local lords. Tokugawa-en was destroyed during World War II and reopened as a public garden in 2004. The garden is one of the most famous places in Nagoya for colourful autumn leaves. Our next stop is **Osu Kannon, a popular Buddhist temple** in central Nagoya. Originally built during the Kamakura Period (1192-1333) in neighbouring Gifu Province, the temple was moved to its current site by Tokugawa Iyeyasu in 1612 after the original temple had been repeatedly damaged by severe flooding. The current buildings are 20th century reconstructions. Beneath Osu Kannon’s main hall is the Shinpukuji Library which contains over 15,000 classic Japanese and Chinese texts. Among these texts are several national treasures and important cultural properties, including the oldest copy of the Kojiki, a chronicle of the early history of Japan including its mythological origins. We then move onto the **Shirotori Garden**, another Japanese-style garden located near Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya. In the centre of the park, there is a tea ceremony room, which is designed based on a shirotori (swan) flying down to rest its wings. A walk to the south western end of the garden showcases many beautiful places with small waterfalls and colourful maple trees. This area is designed to represent Mt. Ontake, and the stream represents Kiso River. We then **visit the Atsuta Shrine** which dates back almost 2,000 years, and is dedicated to the “Five Great Gods of Atsuta”, all of whom are connected with the sacred sword Kusanagi no Tsurugi, or “The Grass Cutting Sword”. The sword, one of the Three Imperial Regalia of Japan, is likened to Britain’s Excalibur. This afternoon we depart Nagoya and make our way to Kyoto for check in and later dinner.

Overnight Kyoto: Mystays Hotel

Day 9. Mon 5 Nov 2018: Kyoto

Breakfast & Dinner

Our day in Kyoto begins at 8.30am as our knowledgeable guide sets the historical scene for Kyoto, hailed the cradle of Japan’s cultural heritage, the former capital is replete with significant monuments and legend-shrouded landmarks. Our first stop is **Eikandō Zenrinji** which is the head temple for the Seizan branch of Jōdo (Pure Land) Buddhism. **Set on hilly grounds near Nanzenji, it is one of Kyoto’s most famous spots for autumn colours.** The temple was founded as a Shingon temple in 853 by the monk Shinsō, a disciple of the grand master Kōbō-Daishi. Shinsō intended to establish a temple for the worship of the Gochi Nyorai, the Five Dhyanī Buddhas, and for this purpose purchased a villa from the court noble Fujiwara no Sekio. In the 12th century, the head priest Eikan, after whom the Eikan-dō Hall is named, turned Zenrinji into a Jōdo temple. We then visit **the Fushimi Inari Shrine**, famous for its thousands of vermilion torii gates, which straddle a network of trails behind its main buildings. The trails lead into the wooded forest of the sacred Mount Inari, which stands at 233 meters and belongs to the shrine grounds. Fushimi Inari is the most important of several thousands of shrines dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. Foxes are thought to be Inari’s messengers, resulting in many fox statues across the shrine grounds. Fushimi Inari Shrine has ancient origins, pre-dating the capital’s move to Kyoto in 794. Our next stop is **Kyoto’s spectacular Sanjusangendo Temple**, established in the twelfth century, it houses 1001 carved wooden statues of Kannon - the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy - set in ranks in the main hall: 500, in ten rows of 50, on each side of the seated figure of Senju Kannon. Sanjusangendo is the only such Sentai Kannon-do (one thousand-Kannon hall) left in existence. The 1001 images are around 167cm tall and were made using a technique called yosegi, which allowed a number of craftsmen to work on one statue. First hollow blocks of wood were put together and roughly carved, then the images were finely carved and lacquered for preservation. This afternoon another interesting visit is to the **Nijo Castle**, a superficially deceptive structure that harbours a magnificent interior, we stroll the lavishly decorated chambers and marvel at glittering gold leaf and opulent tones as our guide offers tales of the building’s heritage. We also visit the **Arashiyama district** which is located in the western suburban part of Kyoto, it’s popular among tourists for the spectacular scenery looking at the mountains and the river. At this time of the year we will be amazed by a superb panoramic view of multi-colored autumn leaves in the mountains.

Day 9. Continued

The ancient wooden bridge Togetsukyo Bridge and the Tenryu Temple are both designated as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. The area has much more to see such as shops and restaurants, it is one of the best district to stroll around. After dinner tonight for those that wish may visit the **Kodai-ji Zen Temple Gardens**. During autumn the temple is open late at night so people can enjoy the magnificent autumn colours illuminated by lighting. The magical scenery of the trees reflecting off of the pond is a must see.

Overnight Kyoto: Mystays Hotel

Day 10. Tues 6 Nov 2018: Kyoto - Nara - Toyahashi - Hamanako

Breakfast & Dinner

We **depart Kyoto today** and begin our drive across to **Toyahashi and Hamanako** via the **World Heritage city of Nara**. Once the prosperous capital city of Japan, Nara's history goes back even further than that of Kyoto, and traditional Japan scenery can be found lining its streets. Nara's ancient buildings are a city highlight, and include historic shrines and temples which have been registered as World Heritage sites. As a model Japanese sightseeing destination, Nara is a place where visitors can find the roots of Japanese culture. Our first stop is the **Todaiji Temple**, a complex of buildings that includes the world's largest wooden structure, the 48m (157 foot-high) Daibutsu-den, built in 743 which houses the 15m (49 foot) gilt bronze Daibutsu (Great Buddha), cast in 749, the largest of its kind in the world. We also visit **The Kasuga Grand Shrine** which has the most beautiful setting of all the sites in Nara. It is set up a hill in a primeval cedar forest that can be approached up an easy path decorated in statues. Inside the temple, there is so much detail in the design and decoration of the shrine. Lanterns hanging all throughout give off a sense of enlightenment. The balance with the nature around it flows through the whole shrine as well. This is a relatively small site but one of the most stunning in its own unique way. Later in the day we transfer to the Hamanako region for our hotel check in and dinner.

Overnight Hamanako: Hamanako Royal Hotel

Day 11. Wed 7 Nov 2018: Toyahashi - Hamanako - Mt Fuji

Breakfast & Dinner

After breakfast we take in the view across Lake Hamana before travelling up towards the south-western foothills of Mt Fuji. Here we visit the **Fujiyoshida Sengen Shrine** which stands in a dense forest and is set off from the road by a long approach lined by stone lanterns and shaded by tall cedar trees. The shrine's red painted buildings include a main hall dating from 1615, a dancing stage and a few auxiliary buildings. We then continue up to the **Kawaguchiko Maples Corridor**, the most famous location for autumn leaf viewing at the base of Mt. Fuji. The 150m tunnel created by 60 towering maple trees with the **iconic Mt. Fuji** in the background and **Lake Kawaguchi** in the foreground is a truly spectacular sight. We then take the drive up to the **Mt Fuji 5th Station** to enjoy the breathtaking panorama. **Mt Fuji 5th Station** is located at 2,300 meters above sea level. Later in the afternoon we will **cruise along the Lake Ashi** enjoying the picturesque and serene natural beauty of the crater lake, along with views of Mt. Fuji. Late afternoon we check into our hotel before dinner.

Overnight Yamanashi: Tominoko Hotel

Day 12. Thurs 8 Nov 2018: Mt Fuji - Kamakura - Tokyo

Breakfast & Dinner

Today we travel back across to Tokyo via the **ancient capital of Kamakura** where we **visit the "Great Buddha"**, a bronze statue of Amida Buddha, which stands on the grounds of Kotokuin Temple. With a height of 13.35 meters, it is the second tallest bronze Buddha statue in Japan, surpassed only by the statue in Nara's Todaiji Temple. The statue was cast in 1252 and originally located inside a large temple hall. However, the temple buildings were destroyed multiple times by typhoons and a tidal wave in the 14th and 15th centuries. So, since 1495, the Buddha has been standing in the open air. We also take a look at the **Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine** which is one of the three major Hachimangu located in Kamakura. Tsurugaoka Hachimangu was built in 1063 and became the capital and centre of The Kamakura Government. We then leave Kamakura and make our way back into Tokyo where we check into our hotel. Late afternoon we **visit the stunning Rikugien Gardens**. The gardens are known as one of the best spots for autumn foliage viewing. The annual illumination event during the season invites many people who enjoy the beautiful collaboration between the flames of autumn leaves and the brilliant illuminations throughout this beautiful example of an Edo era garden.

Overnight Tokyo: Otani Inn Hotel

Day 13. Fri 9 Nov 2018: Tokyo - Australia

Breakfast & In-flight Dinner & Refreshments

This morning we cross to the **large artificial Island of Odaiba** for free time visiting the high-tech shopping precinct, restaurants and entertainment complexes. This afternoon we **transfer to the airport for check in and overnight flight back to Australia**.

Flight Details: QF 80 depart Tokyo (Narita) at 7.00 pm - arrive Melbourne 7.30 am (Saturday 10 Nov 2018)

Day 14. Sat 10 Nov 2018: Tokyo - Australia

On arrival to Melbourne International airport please collect your luggage and make your way through customs. Please make your way to the Domestic Qantas counter for check in for you flight to Launceston

Flight Details: QF 2281 depart Melbourne at 8.55 am - arrive Launceston 10.10 am

Arrive back in Launceston after our wonderful tour of Japan we will transfer you to your home.

McDermott's Coaches

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Japan Autumn Colours



Tour Highlights:

Tokyo Highlights; Asakusa's Senso-ji Temple; The 634m Tokyo Skytree; Nikko National Park; Toshogu Shrine; Lake Chuzenji & Kegon Waterfall; Jigokundani Monkey Park; Matsumoto Castle; Takayama Jinya (former government house); Hida Folk Village; Takayama's Old Town; Omi-cho Market; The Stunning Kenrokuen & Kenrokuen Gardens; Kanazawa Castle; The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art; Shirakawa Village; Onsenji Temple; Kinosaki Art Museum; Osu Kanon (buddhist temple); Atsuta Shrine; Shirotori & Tokugawa-en (Traditional Japanese Gardens); Eikando Zenrinji Temple; Kyoto's Sanjusangendo Temple; Nijo Castle; Kawaguchiko Maples Corridor; Mt Fuji; Lake Kawaguchi; Lake Ashi Cruise; Ancient Kamakura - The Great Buddha; Tsurugaoka Hachimagnu Shrine; Kasuga Grand Shrine; Todaiji Temple; Arashiyama District; World Heritage City of Nara; Higashi Chaya District & much more.

Tour Price Includes:

- Return Economy class airfares from Launceston to Tokyo
- 12 Nights quality accommodation
- All meals as per the itinerary (23 Meals)
- Luxury coach travel
- English speaking tour guide throughout the tour
- All entry fees & rail passes as per itinerary

Tour Price Excludes:

- Other meals than listed in the itinerary, drinks
- Other fees and admissions than listed as included
- Anything stated as optional

Deposit: A deposit of \$1000.00 per person is due on booking along with completed & signed booking forms to secure your place on this tour.

Final Payment: Due no later than Friday 14 July 2018

For more information contact:

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Travel Insurance is recommended!

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