

OUR ITINERARY

Day 1: Monday, Arrival to Tokyo

Yokoso & Konnichiwa! Welcome to Japan! Seeing that we are arriving from all over the world on different flights, we'll all meet at our hotel in Tokyo by Monday afternoon. Gala opening dinner and at Chabad-Lubavitch of Japan in Tokyo. And then back to the hotel for a much needed sleep to prepare for our first touring day tomorrow. **Overnight: Tokyo**

Day 2: Tuesday, Tokyo – Part I

Tokyo-Yokohama is the world's most populous mega-city with over 34 million inhabitants. We'll begin our tour of the Land of the Rising Sun by plunging into **Tsukiji Outer Market**, where the citizens of Tokyo come daily for the best and freshest seafood with which to start their day. Here. We'll also discover typical Japanese street food as we bump shoulders in the alleyways with locals and tourists from all over the world. From one busy Tokyo site, we'll continue to another even busier location; **Asakusa**, Tokyo's former

the best places to see some of the most beautiful urban views of the city. Then it's on to something completely different, as we become part of an immersive art installation called **TeamLab Borderless**. Suffice it to say that "immersive" is the key word. We'll climb to the observatory on the famous **Tokyo Tower** for a bird's-eye view of Tokyo



Open Air Museum where hundreds of sculptures made by the greatest Japanese and world artists are displayed on a mountain slope, immersed into nature and carefully designed botanical elements. The museum also houses the world's largest private collection of the works of Pablo Picasso. We'll return to Tokyo for dinner, after which we'll visit one of Tokyo's two towers for a different view of the city. **Overnight: Tokyo**

Day 4: Thursday, Kyoto – Part I

After Shacharit & breakfast, we'll walk down to **Shinagawa Station** to board the **Shinkansen Bullet Train** for the "flight" down the rails to **Kyoto**,



by night before diving into the throngs at **Shibuya Crossing**, Tokyo's busiest intersection, where thousands of people mass at the day's end to make their way home in any and all of the city's nine railway companies. **Overnight: Tokyo.**

Day 3: Wednesday, Hakone

After Shacharit & breakfast, this morning we will leave Tokyo and head to the mountainous **Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park**. We'll make our way to the resort town of Hakone, best known for quality hot springs, beautiful views and art. The bounty of hot springs is a result of the fact that this is still an active volcanic area (we'll learn about Japan's volcanoes along the way). Upon arrival we'll board a ship and sail across **Lake Ashi**, before riding a



Japan's ancient capital for over 1,000 years. We'll start our tour of Japan's "Jerusalem" with a visit to **Kinkakuji**, the Golden Pavilion and its magnificent gardens, one of Japan's iconic images, followed by stop at Kyoto's primary Zen Garden, **Ryoanji**. We'll continue to **Arashiyama**, where we'll make stops



at the famous **Togetsu Bridge** and the magnificent **Tenryuji Garden**, before making our way into Kyoto's renowned **Bamboo Forest**. At the end of our visit we'll head to the port city of Kobe for dinner at the **Ohel Shelomo** Sefardi synagogue before continuing to our hotel for a well-earned rest. **Overnight: Kobe**



entertainment district. Here we'll visit the oldest and most important Buddhist temple in Tokyo – **Senso-ji**, as well as the colorful pilgrimage alley that leads to it. This is also a shopping stop for those who need it. After these two busy sites, we'll relax as we sail down the Sumida River, To-



kyo's primary waterway as we make our way to **Odaiba**, built on a huge man-made island, home to TV studios, shopping malls, hotels and landmarks. An architecturally futuristic area it's one of

cable car ride up the mountains to **Owakudani Valley**, an active volcanic area, where we'll get up close to this powerful natural phenomenon. We'll have lunch here before heading to the **Hakone**

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Day 5: Friday, Tokyo – Kobe

After Shacharit and breakfast, spend the day in the city of **Kobe**. While not part of Japan's regular tourist route, Kobe offers numerous fascinating insights into Japanese culture. Our first stop will be the **Nunobiki Botanical & Herb Gardens**. These are not traditional Japanese gardens, but are quite spectacular as they are planted on a steep mountain slope overlooking the city. We'll take the cable car to the top and then walk down half-way as we admire the gardens. Sake is Japan's national drink, and we'll examine and taste at the renowned **Hakutsuru Brewery**, before enjoying some free time to wander about downtown and then return to our hotel to and prepare for Shabbat, which we'll spend with the members of the **Ohel Shelomo Sefardi** synagogue. Dating back to



the early 1900s, and founded by Jews from Iraq and Syria, this is the oldest functioning synagogue in Japan. **Overnight: Kobe**

Day 6: Shabbat, Kobe

Even though Ohel Shelomo is a Sefardi synagogue, the community has a Chabad rabbi and they daven at Chabad times. On the way to shul this morning we'll pass some of the old former Jewish homes in the Kitano neighborhood, whose former residents were part of Kobe's international and diplomatic community. We'll discover **why Jews came to Japan** in General and Kobe in particular, and why



it became the haven to the **Sugihara** rescues during World War II. After shul, we'll enjoy Shab-

bat lunch with the community, followed by Mincha, and then we'll walk back to the hotel for a good Shabbat rest. We'll return to the shul for Maariv and Havdalah, and then enjoy a Melave Malka after Shabbat, to end off a most interesting and enjoyable Shabbat. And then a true Japanese highlight: **Karaoke!** Overnight: Kobe

Day 7: Sunday, Kyoto – Part II

After Shacharit & breakfast we'll return today to complete our visit to Kyoto. We'll begin at **Nishiki Market**, the heart of Kyoto's food scene for a fascinating walk-through, before popping into the Samurai & Ninja Museum for an experience of Japan's ancient warrior arts. Then it's on **Nijo Castle**, built by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu. He was the



shogun who united Japan into one country, and then left the Emperor in Kyoto while he established his capital in Edo (Tokyo). He was the first in line of the Tokugawa dynasty which ruled Japan for just over 250 years! We'll continue to From there it's on to the **Kiyomizu Dera** (Pure Water) Temple complex with its beautiful architecture and historic significance. We'll have some free time here to wander about the fascinating stores and the old houses in **Sanneizaka** and **Ninneizaka** lanes. We'll then head to meet a **Geisha** in-training and witness a traditional **Japanese tea ceremony**. We'll have an opportunity to ask her a few questions to learn about her chosen life before heading back to Kobe for dinner and overnight. **Overnight: Kobe**

Day 8: Monday, Hiroshima

After Shacharit & breakfast we'll once again board the Shinkansen and make our way swiftly to Hiroshima, the City of Peace. We'll hop a ferry to cross the waters of the Inland Sea to the hallowed island of **Miyajima**. Here we'll walk among the sacred deer to visit the **Itsukushima Shrine**, from where we'll view Japan's most famous **Torii**, an iconic image of Japan (we'll be seeing at least four of those). We'll also take the cable car to the top of **Mount Misen** for a spectacular view of Japan's **Seto Inland Sea**, which serves as a waterway connecting the Pacific Ocean to the Sea of Japan.

We'll end the day in Hiroshima at the site of the **A-Bomb dome**, the **Peace Park** and the **A-Bomb Museum**. It's a somber visit – but it's an important one. We'll then return to Kobe on the bullet train for dinner and overnight. **Overnight: Kobe**

Day 9: Tuesday, Osaka – Tokyo

Osaka is Japan's 3rd largest city, but it's largest single municipal area. It's a short drive from Kobe



and we'll spend most of the day here. We'll start with a visit to the **Asahi Beer Brewery** to learn about this aspect of Japan's social mores, followed by a bit of history at the **Osaka Castle**, a former Samurai Castle splendidly restored to its original size. We'll ascending to the top of the **Umeda Sky Garden** building. The view from the top is breathtaking! Then it's back down to ground level as we whizz along the tracks back to Tokyo. **Overnight: Tokyo**

Day 10: Wednesday, Tokyo – Part II

After Shacharit & breakfast, we'll check out of the hotel and leave our baggage with the bell desk, as we head out to visit Tokyo's sites once again. We'll visit the **Meiji Shrine**, dedicated to the memory of Emperor Meiji, Japan's 122nd emperor, who ruled from 1867 to 1912 and was responsible for turning Japan from a backward wasteland into an industrial giant. Afterwards, we're off to **Harajuku**. Japan is a land of many contrasts. Tradition and modernity. Ancient and super-modern. Conservative and innovative. Harajuku will be the first time we meet this contrast. It's the area where Japan's cheeky youth present unusual fashion and modern music. We'll return to the hotel to pick up our luggage and head to the airport for our flights back to our home gateway.

Sayonara!

