

# *An Invitation to .... your authentic culinary journey in Japan*



*What comes up to your mind when you image 'Japanese food'? Sushi? Tempura? Needless to say they are classic images of Japanese food, but don't you think you would like to explore more deeply about our food cultures and histories?*

*Diverse landscapes, both Japan Sea and the pacific ocean, rivers, mountains as well as four seasons offer us the variety of meats, fishes, vegetables, and ingredients. From Hokkaido, where many part are covered in snow in winter season, to Okinawa, the tropical sandy shores, developed its own cooking style from row to preserved in each regions.*

*This tour will offer you to experience the variety of food throughout main island of Japan, as well as learning its own cultural and historical background. Not only culinary, you will also see the most important temples, shrines, gardens, museums and neighborhoods in each location.*

# Sample Tour itinerary

## Day 1

Overnight in Tokyo

Welcome to Tokyo, you will be warmly welcomed by your English-speaking assistant at the arrival lobby of Haneda/ Narita airport. Then you will be transferred to Tokyo city by chauffeured car.

## Day 2

Overnight in Tokyo

At 4.30AM, you will be picked up by your driver to observe the famous **Tsukiji's tuna auction!** You will be escorted by a chef and closely see how the auction is carried, then you will have tasting of some fresh seafood that the chef has bidden during the auction. (this part will be your own expense according to what you taste)

After several hours rest back at hotel, your English-speaking guide will meet you at the lobby and take you to Tokyo city sightseeing. Before going on the tour, your lunch stop will be at one of famous Sushi restaurant in Tokyo. On this day followed by your lunch, you will visit **Asakusa**, the Tokyo's most sacred and spectacular temple, **Kappabashi Street**, Tokyo's centre for kitchenware and the source of the plastic food display, **Yanaka district**, where you will find the packed houses in narrow alleys, and traditional food stalls selling rice crackers and old-fashioned candy. While visiting those areas, guide will stop at one of famous **ramen (noodles) restaurant** for lunch.

The tour ends at **Shinjuku Golden Town**, where most of the bars here are just wide enough for a bar, a counter, and a row of stools, followed by visiting a **Izakaya** for dinner to try Japanese local dishes and typical snacks to go with alcohol.



## Day 3

Overnight in Tokyo

**Meiji Jingu Shrine**, the most important Shinto shrine in Tokyo, will be your first visit of the day. Followed by exploring around **Harajuku** and **Omotesando** area in the walking distance from the shrine, the centre of fashion from high-end international showcases to bargain boutiques, you will be then taken to **Nihombashi district**, where used to be the mercantile and entrepreneurial centre of Edo and Meiji Tokyo, which nowadays more known for Tokyo's Japanese traditional cultural area and its specialty shops. Here, you can make a visit to **kitchenware shop** specializing kitchen knives and chopsticks, also visiting a **'dashi', soup stock, shop** and **Japanese confectionery café**, where you can observe how the confectionary is handy made, may be interesting.

The dinner will be arranged at one of **Michelin starred restaurant** according to your request.



## Day 4

## Overnight in Kyoto

Around noon, you will be transferred to Tokyo Station. Get something for your lunch from 'depachika' the basement of department stores, where various range of Japanese and Western gourmet foods are offered, to enjoy on the train ride to Kyoto.

After you are warmly welcomed by your English-speaking guide at platform of Kyoto Station, you will be taken to one of the old zen temple in Kyoto city. Here you will experience the full tea ceremony, not only to be served, you can also experience by yourselves. Followed by tea ceremony, explore Gion area, Kyoto's best known geisha quarter and teahouses. You will be able to run into Geisha and Maiko if you are lucky. Dinner will be arranged in Kyoto city according to your request.



## Day 5

## Overnight in Kyoto

Osaka is your today's destination. First you will be taken to 'Suntory Whiskey Yamazaki Distillery' to learn about the craftsmen's dedication and skill for producing this famous malt whisky at the Yamazaki Distillery through a movie and tasting.

Then you will be enjoying walk-and-eat-tour of locals' favourite foods such as Takoyaki, Karaage, Ebisen in Dotombori and another area in Osaka. If you still have a space in your stomach, your guide gladly arrange you a 'Okonomiyaki' lunch.

Having you stuffed, you will be going on sightseeing for Osaka Castle and Namba Yasaka Shrine, other name is 'The Lion Shrine' from its giant lion shaped building.

You will then back to Kyoto, on this night you will be enjoying the Japanese Kaiseki dinner, a traditional multi-course dinner. Private performance of Maiko and Geisha are available at your request.



## Day 6

## Overnight in Kyoto

Today you will be covering the main highlights of Kyoto, starting from Kinkakuji Temple, the Golden Pavilion, Ryoanji Temple, famous for its rock garden, Sagano Bamboo Forest, Kiyomizudera Temple, that offers wonderful views of Kyoto, Sanjusangendo Temple, that displays 1001 Kannon statues and 1000 armed Kannon, and Fushimi Inari Taisha, with its thousands of torii gates.

During the tour, you will have a chance to visit a shop for 'sansho-chirimen' and 'chili spices' that are originated in Kyoto.

The lunch will be served at 'Obanzai' restaurant, the traditional style of Japanese cuisine native to Kyoto, and in order to be considered as 'Obanzai', at least half of its ingredients must be produced or processed in Kyoto. Dinner is not included on this day, but we are happy to arrange a table according to your request.



## Day 7

Overnight in Kanazawa

You will be escorted to Kyoto Station to catch a direct train to Kanazawa. After 2 hours ride to Kanazawa, you will be welcomed by your English-speaking guide at the platform.

**Omi Market** is Kanazawa's largest fresh food market since the Edo Period, you can either find a restaurant to have your lunch or do walk-and-eat-tour. After you are stuffed, your guide will be taking you to main highlights that Kanazawa offers to you. First start with **Higashi Chaya Town**, the old-fashioned street lamps and wooden-lattice windows hiding elegant restaurants and galleries, and then to **Kenrokuen Garden**, Japan's one of great three gardens established in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. Your sightseeing ends at **Nagamachi Samurai Quarter**, where former samurai lived in Edo period.

You will check-in to one of Japanese styled inn – Ryokan, in Yamashiro Hot Spring or Kanazawa city. **Japanese traditional Kaiseki cuisine in Kanazawa style**, emerged as its own food culture based on the blessing of rich and abundant ingredients ; fresh seafood from the Japan Sea, delicious water flowing down from Hakusam and rich soil which produces abundant quality crops, will be served to delight your night in Kanazawa. Please have relaxed evening with hot spring.



## Day 8

Overnight in Kanazawa

In the morning, you will be taken to **Takayama Morning Market**, held on a daily basis, not only fresh vegetables, fishes and fruits, but you may be able to find Japanese souvenirs as well. Because **Takayama** is surrounded by mountains, the isolated location has meant the survival of unspoiled Edo-period streets lined with tiny shops, museums and eating places that you can walk around, while the pure water is ideal for sake brewing.

Takayama's specialty dish is '**Hida beef**'. You will be having the Hida beef either in BBQ, Sukiyaki, Shabu-Shabu or steak style in your choice. After lunch, you will be taken to **Shirakawago**, the World Heritage Site with unique thatched houses. You will observe this small village and will be back to Takayama.

The last dinner is not included. Any requests are happily arranged.



## Day 9

In the morning, transferred to Komatsu Airport then you will fly back to Tokyo Haneda Airport. The tour ends either at Haneda Airport upon your arrival, or after transferring you back to Narita International Airport, another gateway to Tokyo.

According to your request and interest, we are happy to arrange your own culinary experiences in Japan. Any other interest tours can also be arranged. Please do not hesitate to share with us what you are looking for when you are here in Japan!