



CHERRY BLOSSOM TOUR ITINERARY & PRICE SPRING 2020

Day 1: Friday March 27

Meet your tour leader and fellow travellers in Fukuoka city. There are two pick up points: Fukuoka Airport at 9AM or Hakata Station at 10AM. First stop is the observatory overlooking Karatsu city. Enjoy a birds-eye view of the ocean and the one million beachside pine trees. We then descend for a scenic drive through this enormous forest. For lunch in this seaside town experience the freshest sushi prepared by a professional sushi chef. After lunch we'll stroll amongst the cherry blossom trees in the ruins of a Japanese castle. Experience matcha green tea complemented with a sweet Japanese dainty served by a Kimono-clad lady. Sip your tea and enjoy the beautiful garden view as the feudal lords once did. After check-in, dinner will be based around the fisherman's catch of the day (the local specialty is 'live' squid sashimi).

Overnight in Yobuko



Day 1: Observatory and million tree pine forest

Day 2: Saturday March 28

Today we explore Arita, home to Japan's iconic blue and white pottery. Enjoy a visit to the bright and modern Kyushu Ceramic Museum. You'll be amazed to see trendy designs that are in fact 100's of years old. We'll have lunch and a chance to shop at a gallery selling wonderful but affordable pottery pieces.

After lunch stroll the main street of Arita, lined with pottery shops and galleries. Your guide will show you a hidden spot behind the main street where pottery production first began. Next we visit a much-loved 'weeping' cherry tree, 100 years old, whose flowers cascade like a waterfall. Check into your first resort with *onsen* natural hot-spring bath. The water here is famous for its silky smoothness (you can really feel it). Visitors come here from across Japan for the beautifying effect on the skin. Enjoy a traditional *kaiseki* multi-course dinner in your resort.

Overnight in Ureshino



Day 2: Beautiful 'weeping' cherry tree

Day 3: Sunday March 29

We start the day with more cherry blossom viewing as we take a wander down a beautiful avenue lined with cherry trees. From here we visit one of Kyushu's most impressive shrines and pass by some classic red Japanese 'torii' gates stretching out to the ocean (trending recently on Instagram). You'll get some great photos! We drive along the coast of Ariake Sea which has the biggest tidal difference in Japan. It is famous for the freshness and quality of the seafood caught here, especially the crab, so of course that is what we will have for lunch. After lunch burn some calories with a walk in Unzen Hells. It is an unforgettable experience wandering through the boiling and bubbling volcanic landscape as smelly sulphur steam rises all around. Feel free to spend a moment at the cross erected in remembrance of the area's 17th century Christian martyrs. Take another *onsen* bath when you check into your *ryokan* (traditional Japanese inn). Notice the difference in the type of water compared to last night's stay. This time the water is creamy and sulphurous, great for muscles and joints. Enjoy a unique dinner of volcanically steamed seafood and local mountain veggies.

Overnight in Unzen



Day 3: Wonderfully photogenic Yutoku Inari Shrine

Day 4: Monday March 30

Start the day with a ride up Unzen Ropeway and enjoy the scenic view from 1,300 meters up the mountainside. After this visit the remains of houses buried up to their roofs after a violent volcanic eruption. It's a fascinating visual reminder of this area's wild volcanic past. For lunch, let's try the local favourite of *Guzoni*; rice-cake soup made with 13 different locally sourced ingredients. After lunch take an ocean ferry across to Kumamoto prefecture. Here we'll visit Kyushu's most popular castle. It was damaged in the 2016 earthquake but is still an impressive sight and the locals' favourite cherry blossom spot. Check into your next *onsen* resort (Michelin-listed) and enjoy the rooftop panoramic views and excellent in-house restaurant.

Overnight Aso



Day 4: Kumamoto Castle hidden by cherry blossoms

Day 5: Tuesday March 31

Today's the day you get to stand on the crater rim and peer right inside a bubbling lava-filled volcano (conditions permitting). There are very few places in the world where this is possible so have your cameras ready. The volcano is set amongst Kyushu's most wild and beautiful countryside so enjoy the scenic drive. We'll stop at Kyushu's most revered cherry tree. It's 400 years old, 14 meters tall, and blooms a wonderful pink. Lunch will be a uniquely Japanese experience (think Samurai movies) of charcoal grilled fish and veggies served in a 200 year-old country farmhouse. After lunch we'll take a stroll through the remote and beautiful Kyushu countryside before having a tour and tasting at a traditional saké brewery. Dinner will be served after check in at our next *onsen* resort.

Overnight in Harazuru Onsen



Day 5: Mount Aso volcano crater - get your camera ready!

Day 6: Wednesday April 01

After breakfast we'll take a walk along a riverbank lined with cherry trees and then explore the old town of Ukiha. You'll see a wonderful display of traditional dolls (your timing is just right for 'Hina Matsuri' dolls' festival), enjoy the local specialty of eel for lunch and then do some strawberry picking! The final group event of your tour is one of the best: take a trip to see the ruins of Fukuoka Castle. They are lit up at night to showcase the flowers from 1,000 cherry trees. Stroll amongst the ruins and soak up the festive atmosphere. Choose from dozens of stalls selling much-loved Japanese festival food for dinner. You can either join the tour bus back to the hotel after dinner or enjoy your final evening free and easy for shopping or nightlife

Overnight in Fukuoka city



Day 6: Fukuoka Castle nighttime sakura festival



Final evening: Fukuoka riverside

Day 7: Thursday April 02

Check out after breakfast in your hotel. The tour is ended but the photos and memories remain. If you want to stay one or more extra nights in Fukuoka city we can help make the arrangements.



TOUR PRICE

¥ 275,000 (Japanese Yen)

Early-bird Discount: book before 30 November 2019 and pay only ¥259,000!

Price is per person based on two or more people sharing a room. For a single traveller staying in a room alone add ¥99,000.



INCLUSIONS

Accommodation (6-nights) with breakfast

Lunch x 6, Dinner x 5

Transport in private tour bus

All tours as mentioned

English-speaking tour leader



EXCLUSIONS

Flights

Dinner on Day 6

Transport Day 7

Alcohol and snacks



Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of accommodation will I stay?

You will stay in Japanese-style accommodation for the first 5 nights. For the final night you will stay in a Western hotel in central Fukuoka. Rooms will be 2-3 pax per room depending on the size of your travelling party. You will only share a room with your family or friends.

What kind of food is served on the tour?

This tour focuses on traditional Japanese cuisine with an emphasis on locally sourced produce. You will enjoy a wide variety of veggies, seafood and Kyushu-reared beef.

What is 'onsen' bathing?

An *onsen* is a bathing pool using water from natural hot-springs. It is a wonderful pleasure with many health benefits. Please note you will be required to be naked while bathing and baths are sex-segregated. If you feel uncomfortable bathing naked in public, or prefer to bathe with a loved one, we may be able to arrange a private bath for you (if available, and subject to an additional charge). Contact us for more information about this.

How will I travel around?

Private bus throughout the tour.

Who will lead the tour?

This is a rare opportunity to join a tour personally planned and guided by the Kyushu Journeys founder. [Moo](#) is a Kyushu local so take the chance to learn from her extensive knowledge of Kyushu and the local cuisine.

How do I secure my booking?

We can hold you place(s) on the tour without any payment for 7 days to give you time to book your flight. After 7 days 20% deposit is required to secure your place(s) on the tour. Full payment is due 60 days before the tour begins.

What is the cancellation charge?

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ■180 - 60 days before: 20% | ■59 - 8 days before: 30% |
| ■7 - 3 days before: 50% | ■2 days before or later: 100% |

What's the next step

Email us (letsgo@kyushujourneys.com) and inform us how many participants or ask any questions. We will inform you next steps and full Terms & Conditions.

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