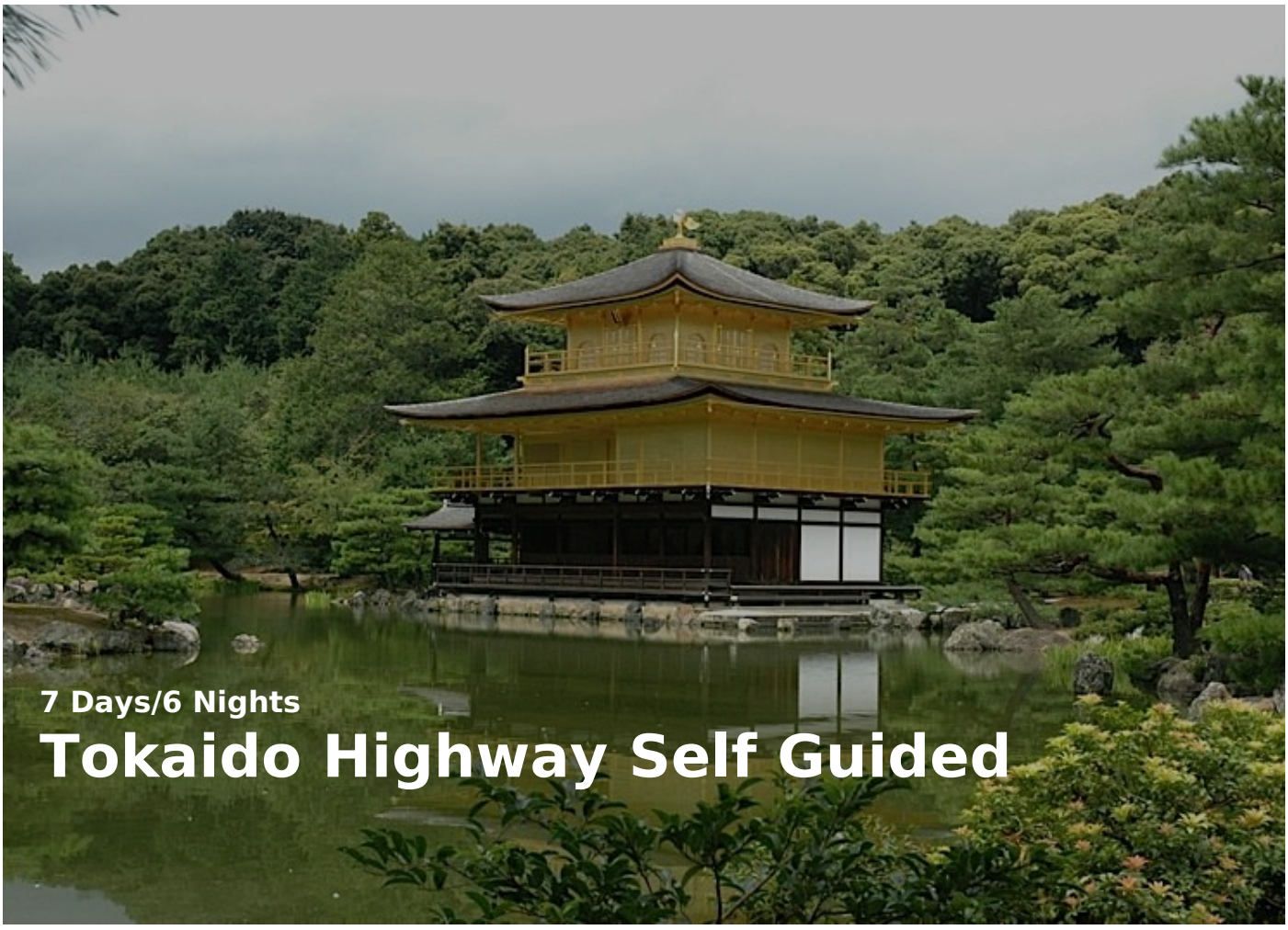


SAMURAI TOURS

Adventures in Discovering Traditional Japan

www.samuraitours.com

Tokaido Highway Self Guided



7 Days/6 Nights

Tokaido Highway Self Guided

Tour Overview

Experience more of Tokyo and Kyoto on the Tokaido Highway Self Guided tour. The Tokaido Highway, built by the Tokugawa Shoguns in the early 17th century, connected the new military capital of Tokyo with the imperial, cultural capital of Kyoto. Follow in the steps of Daimyo (feudal lords) and Samurai as you visit the two greatest cities of Japan.

📍 Destinations

Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto

Tour Details

To the foreigner, Tokyo may seem like a whirlwind of people and traffic, yet behind the ordered chaos lies remnants of a very different past. You could easily spend a lifetime exploring Tokyo and never run out of places and things to discover. From Ueno’s old museums and traditional houses to Ginza’s ultra-modern department stores and shops, the sheer energy level of Tokyo will sweep you away. Business men and excited school children flood the streets by day, and mazes of blazing neon and lively pedestrians fill the streets by night. Tokyo is not just a destination- it’s an experience.

Steeped in history and tradition, Kyoto has in many ways been the cradle of Japanese culture. A stroll through Kyoto today is a walk through 11 centuries of Japanese history. Kyoto is endowed with an almost overwhelming legacy of ancient Buddhist temples, majestic palaces, and gardens of every shape and size. For many, just the name of Kyoto conjures up the classic images of Japan: streets of traditional wooden houses, the click-clack of geta (wooden sandals) on the stone-paved roads, geisha in a flourish of brightly colored silks, and a tea master warming water and making tea.

If you have the extra time, customize your itinerary by adding the available upgrades to some of Japan’s most popular destinations.

Tour Highlights	✔ Ginza ✔ Akihabara ✔ Hakone ✔ Kyoto
Tour Inclusions	✔ Meeting service at the arrival airport ✔ Electronic version of Tour Handbook and Japanese History ✔ Bi-lingual maps, addresses and phone numbers for all your lodging ✔ English-speaking emergency contact number in Japan ✔ Detailed Directions on how to travel from city to city ✔ Reserved Seat Shinkansen (bullet train) tickets ✔ 8 Hours with a guide
Tour Exclusions	✖ International airfare is NOT included. ✖ A printed itinerary is not included ✖ Alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and desserts are NOT included

Map



Tour Destinations

Tokyo
Hakone
Kyoto

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in Tokyo

You will be welcomed at Tokyo's Narita Airport by a Samurai Tours representative who will help you with your rail pass exchange, obtain your limousine bus ticket into Tokyo, and assist with boarding the bus to your hotel in Tokyo. No meals included.

Travel: 1 1/2 Hours

Day 2 Tour Tokyo with a Guide

After breakfast the licensed, English-speaking guide will meet you in the lobby of your accommodations. The guided tour will start with traveling to Tokyo Tower. The Tokyo Tower is a communications and observation tower in the center of Tokyo. At 332.9 meters (1,092 ft) it is the second tallest structure in Japan. The structure is an Eiffel Tower-inspired lattice tower, with a main observatory at 150 meters that is reached via elevator or a 600-step staircase. Thanks to the tower's central location, the observatory offers an interesting view of the city despite being only at a relatively moderate height. We will then travel to the famous Ginza district, the most expensive real estate in the world. Ginza is recognized by many as one of the most luxurious shopping districts in the world, attracting visitors and regulars alike from across the globe. Before continuing we will stop for a delicious lunch of Kushiage (fried meat and vegetables on bamboo skewers). Next, we will travel to the nearby Asakusa area. Here we will tour the Nakamise-dori, Senso-ji Buddhist Temple, and the Asakusa Shrine where you will learn about Buddhist and Shinto Japanese religious practices. The guide will either escort you back to your hotel, or give you directions for how to travel back on your own if you would like to stay in Asakusa longer. Breakfast at the hotel and lunch at a local restaurant included.

Travel: 1 Hour

Day 3 Tokyo

Today is free to explore Tokyo on your own. Go shopping for that perfect souvenir, visit the Meiji Shrine dedicated to the Japanese emperor of the 19th century, or wander through the trendy Shibuya or Harajuku districts where you will more than likely see interesting and far-out fashions. Breakfast is included.

Travel: N/A

Day 4 Travel to Hakone; Tour Hakone; Travel to Kyoto

Before checking out you will transfer your main luggage Kyoto, and will be traveling to Hakone and Kyoto with an overnight bag only. You will make a stop in Hakone Yumoto today on your way to Kyoto. The Tokaido Highway ran through the Hakone area during the Edo period giving travelers a beautiful view of nearby Mt. Fuji (weather permitting). You can stop at Owakudani which offers magnificent views of Mount Fuji in what is still an active volcanic region. We also recommend exploring the thermally-heated pools and mud pots while enjoying the famous "black eggs" which have been hard-boiled in the thermally-heated mineral waters (it is said that eating one of these eggs will add seven years to your life). After enjoying all that Hakone has to offer, you will travel by local train and Shinkansen to Kyoto. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel: 3 Hours

Day 5 Kyoto

After breakfast, we recommend starting the day at the Nijo Castle. Built in 1603, it was the Kyoto home of Tokugawa Ieayasu, the first Tokugawa Shogun. The ostentatious style of construction was intended as a demonstration of Ieyasu's prestige, and to signal the demise of the emperor's power. The finest artists of the day filled the castle with delicate transom woodcarvings and paintings by the Kano School on sliding doors. One of the castle's most intriguing features is the so-called "nightingale" floors. To protect the Shogun from real or imagined enemies, these floorboards creak when stepped on. Next, you can visit Kinkaku-ji. Kinkaku-ji, also known as the Golden Pavilion, is one of Kyoto's most recognizable attractions. The gleaming building covered in gold leaf seems to float on the aptly named Mirror Pond, especially on a sunny day. We suggest spending some time in Nishiki Koji. Nishiki Koji is a narrow, five block long shopping street lined with more than one hundred shops and restaurants. Known as "Kyoto's Kitchen", this lively retail market specializes in all things food related such as fresh seafood, produce, knives and cookware, and is a great place to find seasonal foods and Kyoto specialties. You will also have the opportunity to participate in an authentic tea ceremony, as there is a tea house on almost every street in Kyoto. The regimented discipline of the tea ceremony has been practiced for more than 400 years, and at one time was considered mandatory for Samurai as an aid to train the mind. You will retrieve your main luggage from the hotel in the afternoon. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel:N/A

Day 6 Kyoto

Today is free to explore areas that you missed yesterday. We recommend taking a train to the nearby city of Fushimi, one of the largest sake producing regions of Japan. Here you can visit the Fushimi Inari Shrine which was established in the 8th century. It is famous for the long tunnels of vermilion torii gates straddling a network of trails leading to the top of the heavily forested Mt. Inari. You can then travel to the Higashiyama District filled with narrow, cobblestone alleys, or visit the Yasaka Shrine, also known as the Gion Shrine. This shrine, built over 1350 years ago, is one of the most famous shrines in Kyoto. The shrine's main hall combines the honden (inner sanctuary) and haiden (offering hall) into a single building. From here you can walk to the famous Gion Geisha District where you can see where the Geiko (in Kyoto they call themselves Geiko, not Geisha) and Maiko live and work. You may even see one on their way to one of their appointments. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel: N/A

Day 7 Sayonara

It's time to say "sayonara" (goodbye) to Japan. You will take the express train to the Kansai International Airport, just outside Osaka where you will catch your flight home. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel: 1 Hour

Dates & Pricing

Low Season-
$2,615.00 (per person, based on double occupancy)
January 6 – February 28
June 16 – August 5
August 18 – August 31
November 16 – December 24

Regular Season-
$2,936.00 (per person, based on double occupancy)
March 1 – March 14
May 7 – June 15
September 1 – October 14

Peak Season-
$3,194.00 (per person, based on double occupancy)
March 15 – May 6 (Cherry Blossom & Golden Week)
August 6 – August 17 (Obon Holiday)
October 15 – November 15 (Fall Foliage)
December 25 – January 5 (New Years)

Add-On Tours

Our tours and tour itineraries are the best, but as the saying goes, “you can’t make everyone happy all of the time”. There may a specific destination or a specific experience you may want to include in your visit to Japan that may not be included your tour. Choose from our Add On tours to include your interests and make your Japan tour even better.

Click HERE **to view all of the Add-On Tours.**

Or, use the arrows to scroll though the recommended list of Add-On Tours for this tour.
















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Inclusions

- Accommodations in 3-star hotels including all taxes, fees, and breakfast every morning (contact us regarding accommodation upgrades)
  - Tokyo: Western-style hotel such as Shinagawa Prince Hotel
  - Kyoto: Western-style hotel such as Dormy Inn Kyoto

- Addresses, phone numbers, and maps of accommodations in both Japanese and English
- Meeting service at Tokyo's Narita Airport upon arrival
- Reserved seat tickets on the following segments:
  - Shinkansen from Shinagawa (Tokyo) to Odawara
  - Shinkansen from Odawara to Kyoto
  - Express train from Kyoto to Kansai Airport
- SUICA Card pre-charged with 2,500 Yen for the local trains and subways in Tokyo and Kyoto
- Baggage transfer forms (we will provide the necessary forms in Japanese to transfer your main baggage ahead, allowing you the freedom of traveling light. The service provided will only work overnight, so you will need to travel with an overnight bag. The actual transfer fees are not included and will be paid by you at the time of transfer. These fees normally run between 1,250 Yen and 2,500 Yen)
- Full Day Tour with a licensed, English-speaking Japanese guide on the first full day in Japan (day 2 of the itinerary)
- Emergency contact number in Japan
- Airport transfers
- Detailed, easy-to-follow directions from city to city
- Recommended train schedule including optional trains 2-3 hours before and 2-3 hours after the recommended trains
- Hakone Free Passes for travel in and around Hakone Yumoto Onsen
- Electronic version of itinerary
- A copy of our "Gaijin on Getas" tour handbook (this is the same popular handbook our escorted tour members receive) which contains 150 pages of Japan travel tips, Japanese language tips, Japanese customs and etiquette, and Japanese history to prepare you properly for your trip and allow you to enjoy Japan even more after you arrive)
- Recommended sightseeing and transportation options for each destination

What's Not Included

- Local transportation (subways, buses, taxis, etc.)
- All admission fees (except where noted)
- Lunches and dinners (except where noted)
- Desserts at any included meals
- Drinks other than water and tea at any included meals
- A printed itinerary is not included

Thank you for downloading this PDF version of our tour. Please visit our website at www.samuraitours.com/tours for the most current dates, prices and information.

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