

# Japan Travel Tips



## Sapporo (Hokkaido)

Sapporo is the fourth-largest city in Japan by population, and the largest city on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. Sapporo is known outside Japan for having hosted the 1972 Winter Olympics, the first ever held in Asia, and for the city's annual Yuki Matsuri, internationally referred to as the Sapporo Snow Festival, which draws more than 2 million tourists from around the world.

## Tokyo

Tokyo is the capital city of Japan with a population of around 13 million people. It is the centre of politics, economy and culture in contemporary Japan. Tokyo has many faces: skyscrapers towering up to the sky, preserved streets and traditional facades, a myriad of amusement facilities, and tranquil and elegant gardens and temples.

## Nikko

Nikko lies at the foot of Mt. Nyoho-san in the western part of Tochigi and it has developed as the temple town for Futara-san-jinja Shrine, Toshogu Shrine and Rin-no-ji Temple. There runs the Nikko-Suginamiki-Kaido (Nikko's Japanese-cedar-lined Road), which is designated as a natural monument. And the city forms a part of the Nikko National Park.

## Mt. Fuji

Mt. Fuji is 7,545 ft. high and is the highest mountain in Japan. The mountain has been selected as a "cultural" rather than a "natural" heritage site. As per UNESCO, Mount Fuji has "inspired artists and poets and been the object of pilgrimage for centuries". With unrivalled magnificence and a beautiful shape, it is the world-famous as a symbol of Japan.

## Nagoya

The City of Nagoya is the centre of politics, economics and culture of Aichi Prefecture. The city has Nagoya Castle, noted for the golden pair of "shachis", or the imaginary animals like fish with the head of the tiger, on top of the roof, and Atsuta Jingu Shrine with a history of 1,900 years.

## Takayama

Takayama is located in northern Gifu Prefecture. It is most famous for the Sanno-machi Historic District and the biannual Takayama Festival, which has been designated as one of Japan's most beautiful festivals. During the festival, intricately crafted festival floats are displayed in the city. The floats themselves are testament to the region's history and are a chance to see the culmination of hundred's of years worth of artistry and craftsmanship.

## Kyoto

Kyoto, one of Japan's ancient capitals, prospered as a hub of politics, economy and culture for some 1100 years, before the capital was relocated in the 19th century to its present location, Tokyo. Kyoto is home to many elaborate gardens, temples and shrines built during this long period. Kyoto is overflowing with World Heritage listed cultural artefacts and architecture.

## Nara

Founded as the first permanent capital of Japan, Nara commemorates its 1300th anniversary of foundation in 2010. With its countless shrines, temples, and museums, which take you back through history, Nara is an ideal place to stroll around and discover the heart of Japanese culture.

## Osaka

Osaka is Japan's third largest city, with a population of around 2.6 million. The city has a longer history than Tokyo as a metropolis of Japan. The vitality and charm of Osaka's distinctive performing arts and food culture attract many visitors to the city.

## Kanazawa

Kanazawa, the seat of the prefectural office, is made up of three hills, the Kodatsuno Plateau that stretches southeast between the Asano-gawa and Sai-kawa rivers and Mt. Utatsu-yama and Teramachidai, which spread out on both sides. It is the center of economy, commerce, and culture in the Hokuriku region. Kanazawa has prospered for some 300 years since the feudal lord Maeda Toshiie built a castle here in the late 16th century.

## Hiroshima

A short bullet train ride from Osaka will bring you to the city of Hiroshima. Hiroshima is known as the first city devastated by an atomic bomb during World War II. Off the coast of Hiroshima is the small island of Miyajima, the Red "Torii" of Itsukushima Shrine floating in the sea, is famous as one of Japan's three most beautiful views.

## Fukuoka

Fukuoka is situated in the northern extremity of Kyushu, facing the Sea of Suo to the north-east, the Sea of Genkai to the northwest, and the Sea of Ariake to the southwest. As the prefecture borders the Korean Peninsula to the continent of China with a strait in between, Fukuoka was the first place in Japan to be exposed to the culture of the continent. Ever since the Government-General of Kyushu, Dazaifu, was set up in the 7th century, Fukuoka has grown as the hub of the Kyushu region.

## Okinawa

Okinawa Prefecture is made up of the Ryukyu Islands, which at their southern extremity begin at Nansai Island, and lie between Kyushu, the most southwesterly of Japan's four main islands, and Taiwan. Okinawa consists of 160 islands of various size scattered across a vast area of ocean. The temperature in winter is about the same as that of springtime in Tokyo and Osaka, making it warm and comfortable throughout the year.

## Climate

The weather is a favourite topic of conversation in Japan. This is unsurprising given the complexity of the climate in a country spanning 20 degrees of latitude. Japan experiences four distinct seasons. Spring is March to May, summer is June to August, Autumn is September to November and Winter is December to February.

**Time Difference** Japan is 1 hour behind Australian Eastern Standard Time, except during Daylight Saving Time when there is a 2-hour difference.

**Passport and Visas** Australian need a current passport with at least six months validity from date entry and a visa is not required for Australian passport holders for stay up to 90 days. Non-Australian passport holders should check their visa requirements with the Japanese Consulate-General or their travel consultant.

**Electricity** As a voltage in Japan is 100V, travellers are required an adapters to convert any appliances. 60Hz in the west, 50Hz in the east and Tokyo. Flat 2-pin plugs.

**Currency** The unit of Japanese currency is the YEN, with three bills, 1000, 5000 and 10000, plus coins of smaller denomination, 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500. You can buy YEN at hotels, banks, and other authorized money exchangers, however it is recommended to change your money prior to travel.

**Credit Cards** Credit cards and debit cards of the major issuers are becoming increasingly accepted in the major cities, however towns in more remote areas will only accept cash payment.

**Tipping** There is not tipping in Japan and it is normal to pay a restaurant bill at the register, not with a waitress.

## Communications

Telephone / Fax: Full international direct dial service. Country Code: 81.

2015	01st Jan	New Year's Day
	12th Jan	Coming of Age Day
	11th Feb	National Day
	21st Mar	Vernal Equinox
	29th Apr	Birth day of Emperor Showa Day
	03rd May	Constitution Day
2015	04th May	Greenery Day
	05th May	Children's Day
	20th Jul	Ocean Day
	21st Sep	Respect for the Aged Day
	22nd Sep	Bridge Public holiday
	23rd Sep	Autumnal Equinox Day
	12th Oct	Health and Sports Day
	03rd Nov	Culture Day
23rd Nov	Labour Thanks giving Day	
23rd Dec	The Emperor's Birthday	

## J F M A M J J A S O N D

Sapporo	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	23.9	24.8	32	43.7	53.6	60.8	62.6	66.2	60.8	50	38.3	27.5
	2.4	1.3	2.3	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.0	4.1	3.8	3.0	2.5	2.0

Tokyo	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	41.4	42.1	47.3	57.2	64.4	71.6	77.0	80.6	73.4	62.6	53.6	46.4
	1.8	2.4	3.9	4.9	5.4	7.3	5.0	5.8	7.0	6.5	3.5	1.8

Kyoto / Osaka	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	41.9	42.8	48.2	57.2	66.2	73.4	80.6	82.4	75.2	64.4	55.4	46.4
	1.8	2.4	3.9	4.9	5.4	7.3	5.0	5.8	7.0	6.5	3.5	1.8

Hiroshima	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
	42.8	42.8	48.2	57.2	66.2	73.4	80.6	82.4	75.2	64.4	54.5	46.4
	2.2	2.9	5.0	5.5	6.1	9.1	10.2	5.6	6.8	3.0	2.5	1.3

Average Temperature (max. °F)  
Average Rainfalls (inches)

