

# Japan Journeys

Dedicated to Japan

## Press Release

### Japan Journeys launches first Gourmet Tour of Japan in May 2010

London, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009 - Specialist tour operator Japan Journeys is celebrating the news that Tokyo has leaped ahead of Paris as the city with the most Michelin-starred restaurants, by running its first ever Gourmet Tour of Japan in May 2010. Japan Journeys is the first tour operator to offer a specialist gastronomic tour of Japan.

The ten-day itinerary will include a cookery class in Tokyo, as well as a tour of a sake brewery, a visit to the biggest fish market in the world and the opportunity to sample some of the world's best cooking at Tokyo's Michelin-starred restaurants.

The latest edition of the Michelin guide to Tokyo reveals that the city now has 11 three-star restaurants, with the city as a whole boasting over 260 Michelin stars. Travellers with Japan Journeys will therefore get to experience first hand why Tokyo is the newly crowned gastronomic capital of the world by participating in a cooking class in the city, trying a traditional *o-bento* and visiting the city's best ramen noodle bars. The tour also takes in Kyoto and Nara, giving travellers the chance to take a trip on Japan's famous Bullet Train and attend a Sumo Tournament.

The tour has two departure dates on 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May 2010 and costs £2,245 per person based on two sharing including international flights. There is a maximum of 14 guests per tour and the group is accompanied by an experienced, Japanese-speaking guide at all times.

Japan Journeys' Gourmet Tour starts in the beautiful city of Kyoto, which is renowned for its excellent cuisine, as well as its female *geishas*. Here, guests will stay for four nights in a centrally-located three star hotel and visit beautiful shrines, temples and gardens. On arrival, guests will be treated to a fabulous *sukiyaki* meal, which involves slowly simmering meat, tofu and vegetables in a shallow iron pot in a mixture of soy sauce, sugar and mirin.

On the fourth day, the tour will visit the ancient city of Nara, home to Todai-ji Temple, the world's largest wooden building, and the Great Buddha statue. Guests will enjoy a lunch of *soba* noodles before visiting a sake brewery. For dinner, participants will enjoy a *kaiseki* (haute cuisine) meal for which Kyoto is famed.

On the fifth day, the Gourmet Tour itinerary takes the group to the Nishiki-koji food market – a staggering array of locally produced goods from green tea and bean-paste to vegetables and seafood. Participants also visit a local temple, where they can sample a very tasty *shojin ryori* (monk's food) lunch. As meat was not traditionally eaten in Buddhist Japan, this kind of cuisine became another speciality of the Kyoto area.

The group then returns to Tokyo by Bullet Train, on which they'll enjoy a traditional *o-bento*, or lunchbox. In the afternoon, participants of the Gourmet Tour will take part in a cooking class to learn how to make some traditional Japanese dishes.

The next three days are spent exploring Tokyo, including a visit to one of the city's best *ramen* noodle bars and the choice of dinner at a Michelin-starred restaurant.

On the morning of the eighth day, guests will get up early to visit Tsukiji, the biggest fish market in the world, where tuna is the main attraction. This trip is followed by the freshest sushi breakfast imaginable. In the afternoon, the group will visit the beautiful gardens of Hamarikyū before cruising up the Sumida River to Asakusa, the old heart of Tokyo. Dinner is at Kappabashi, a playground for restaurateurs with an incredible range of crockery and cooking utensils.

The last day is free for participants to do as they please. Japan Journeys recommends spending the day at a Sumo Tournament, which is taking place on 18 May 2010. Before departing for the UK, the group will enjoy a farewell dinner of *nabe*, a hearty Japanese-style hot pot.

#### **Tour dates and prices:**

The first tour takes place between 10<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2010 (the Sumo Tournament only takes place during this tour), whilst the second runs between 24<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010. The ten-day tour costs £2,245 per person based on two sharing.

The cost includes direct return flights in economy class with Japan Airways; eight nights' accommodation at centrally-located 3\* hotels in Kyoto and Tokyo on a bed and breakfast basis; some lunches and dinners; a cookery class in Tokyo; transfers by private coach; entrance fees for all named activities; and green tea at Daitoku-ji temple. The price does not include optional activities, such as dinner at the Michelin-starred restaurant; drinks; insurance; and baggage transfer.

Those wishing to extend their trip can take advantage of Japan Journeys' reduced hotel rates of £45 per person based on two sharing.

#### **About Japan Journeys:**

Japan Journeys was established in 2004. It is a dedicated Japan specialist and the number one provider of manga and bonsai tours to Japan. It also offers a Classic Japan Tour, as well as more specialist gap year programmes for those aged under 29, a Quilters' Tour of the country and

a luxury Hidden Islands of Japan cruise. Japan Journeys also works with private clients to arrange tailor-made itineraries.

For more information, please go to: [www.japanjourneys.co.uk](http://www.japanjourneys.co.uk) or telephone 020 7766 5267.

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