

## Sapporo Snow Festival & Japan Winter Highlights - AJWF

13 days: Tokyo to Sapporo

### What's Included

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- Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Wellness Moment: Seninburo Hot Spring Visit, Hongū
- CEO-led city tour of Tokyo
- Orientation tour (Kanazawa)
- Ninja Temple visit
- Minshuku stay with traditional meals
- Instant Ramen Museum visit (Osaka)
- CEO-led city tour of Kyoto
- Orientation walks in Osaka and Sapporo
- Sapporo Snow Festival visit
- Snow Light Path Festival visit (Otaru)
- Jigokudani Park visit
- Minshuku stay (Noboribetsu)
- Internal flight
- All transport to/from included activities and between destinations

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2016 - December 31st, 2016

### Itinerary

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**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

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#### Day 1 Tokyo

Arrive at any time.

There are no planned activities until an evening welcome meeting.

#### **Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group**

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

#### Day 2 Tokyo

Enjoy a morning tour of some of the city's highlights. With a free afternoon, opt to explore more of Tokyo's diverse districts.

#### **Free Time**

Tokyo Afternoon

Pay a visit to iconic Mt Fuji or explore more of the buzzing city.

#### **Modern Tokyo City Tour**

Tokyo 2h30m

Head into the metropolis and discover some of Tokyo's modern highlights on a CEO-guided tour. Visit places like Meiji Jingu Shrine, Shibuya, Harajuku, and with a combination of train rides and walking.

### **Day 3 Tokyo/Shirakawa-go**

It's a long travel day to reach the scenic village of Shirakawa-go. View the unique architecture before settling into a local style inn for the night. Enjoy a traditional dinner.

#### **Local Bus**

Kanazawa – Shirakawa 1h30m-2h62km

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

#### **Bullet Train**

Nagiso-eki – Kanazawa-eki 2h30m-3h400km

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train.

#### **Meals included: Dinner**

### **Day 4 Shirakawa-go/Kanazawa**

Enjoy a traditional breakfast before travelling to Kanazawa by bus. Wander through the samurai village on a short guided walk. Opt to visit the impressive 21st Century Museum, the geisha district, or Kenrokuen garden.

#### **Local Bus**

Shirakawa – Kanazawa 1h30m-2h62km

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

#### **Nagamachi Samurai District Walk**

Kanazawa 30m

Step back in time with a visit to the Nagamachi Samurai district of Kanazawa. Take a walk through the historic samurai district located just below the Kanazawa Castle, where traditionally samurai and their families lived in mud huts.

#### **Optional Activities - Day 4**

##### **Kenroku-En Garden Visit**

Kanazawa

320JPY per person

Walk around this breathtaking garden, ranked one of the top three in Japan. With unique bridges, ponds and fountains, pagodas and tea houses there's lots to see here in any season.

##### **Higashi Geisha District Visit**

Kanazawa

Step back in time with a visit to the Higashi Chaya geisha district of Kanazawa. Learn about the geisha culture, prevalent in Kanazawa since the 17th century. Visit the traditional two-story wooden houses decorated with lattice and discover the traditions behind this iconic Japanese way of life.

##### **Myoryuji Ninja Temple Visit**

Kanazawa

1000JPY per person

Visit the famous Ninja Temple. While there's no evidence linking the temple to ninjas, the hidden doorways, passages and escape routes seem designed for stealthy attackers. Please leave all nunchucks with security.

##### **21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art**

Kanazawa

450-1200JPY per person

If you are interested in eccentric art visit this beautiful museum with unique exhibits and architecture. Capture a trippy underwater photo in the simulated swimming pool.

##### **Kanazawa Castle Visit**

Kanazawa

Free-320JPY per person

Visit the massive castle located beside the Kenrokuen Garden. At over 400 years old, the castle has a great history and is the perfect place to wrap up exploration of the gardens.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

#### **Day 5 Kanazawa/Kawayu Onsen**

Travel to Kawayu Onsen in the Kii mountains and settle into the traditional inn for the evening. Visit the seninburo onsen, dug into the riverbed, and soak in the natural hot spring. Savour a traditional dinner at the inn.

It's a long, but scenic, travel day to reach the Wakayama prefecture. Kawayu Onsen is known for its large, outdoor onsen bath dug every winter into the river bed.

Dress in the yukata (cotton kimono) provided by the inn and stroll over to the seninburo (large public hot spring) to enjoy an unforgettable soak in the steamy natural hot spring water.

#### **Local Train**

Kanazawa – Tanabe 4h30m

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

#### **Local Bus**

Tanabe – Hongū 2h

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

#### **Traditional Minshuku Stay and Meal**

Hongū

Dress in the yukata (cotton kimono) provided by the minshuku (inn) and savour a delicious local meal.

#### **Your Wellness Moment: Seninburo Hot Spring Visit**

Enjoy a relaxing dip in this spacious natural hot spring bath – dug right into the riverbed!

### **Meals included: Dinner**

#### **Day 6 Kawayu Onsen/Osaka**

Spend a free morning in the area. Opt to walk along the ancient Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail or visit the Hongu Taisha Shrine and giant torii gate of Oyu No Hara. Travel to Osaka in the late afternoon and opt for a night out in buzzing Namba.

#### **Free Time**

Hongū Morning

There is so much to do! Opt to walk along the ancient Kumano Kodo pilgrimage trail or visit the scenic Hongu Taisha Shrine.

#### **Local Bus**

Hongū – Tanabe 2h

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

#### **Local Train**

Tanabe – Osaka 2h

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

#### **Free Time**

Osaka Evening

Check out the city lights in lively Namba and be sure to stop for a photo on the Dotombori Bridge.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

#### **Day 7 Osaka**

Visit the Instant Ramen Museum and create your own instant noodles. Explore this vibrant city with free time, opting to visit Osaka Castle Park or browse Shinsaibashi's trendy shops.

Osaka has heaps to offer including Osaka Castle Park, Shinsaibashi shopping street and Dotombori Bridge. Be sure to try "takoyaki" the city's famous squid snack. Osaka is a unique culinary destination – opt for a group meal of "kushikatsu".

#### **Free Time**

Osaka Morning

Explore this vibrant city and be sure to sample some local dishes.

#### **Instant Ramen Museum Visit**

Osaka

Explore the Instant Ramen Museum and learn about this culinary phenomenon. Create your own unique cup of instant noodles to take home.

## Day 8 Osaka/Kyoto

Continue on to nearby Kyoto and enjoy a morning city tour. With options like a tea ceremony, a traditional costume photo shoot, and visits to temples or museums, there's tons to see and do.

### Bullet Train

Osaka - Kyoto 15m

Get to your next destination faster than the speed of light (ok maybe not that fast) aboard a high-speed train.

### City Tour

Kyoto

Take in the highlights of this historic city on a guided tour. Walk the corridors of Nijo Castle, founded by the Tokugawa Shogunate, and snap photos of Kinkaku-ji, also known as "Temple of the Golden Pavillion" - one of the country's most iconic sights.

### Free Time

Kyoto Half Day

Discover all that this culturally rich city has to offer.

## Day 9 Kyoto/Sapporo

Catch a flight from Osaka to the island of Hokkaido. Enjoy some free time in Sapporo with an optional welcome meeting for any new travellers joining the group here.

### Plane

Osaka - Sapporo 2h

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... yup, it is a plane, actually.

### Free Time

Sapporo Half Day

Start exploring this northern city.

## Day 10 Sapporo

Take an orientation tour of the city before spending the day at the Sapporo Snow Festival. In the afternoon, depart for Otaru to experience this town's Snow Light Path Festival. Head back to Sapporo for the night.

### Orientation With CEO

30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

### Sapporo Snow Festival Visit

Sapporo

Experience the city transformed into a winter wonderland. Spread across several venues, the Snow Festival is one of the world's largest winter festivals and offers so much to see and do. Snap photos of the impressive snow and ice sculptures that line Odori Park and Susukino (be sure to check them out illuminated after dark), try out the snow slides at Tsudome, and savour the delicious festival food on offer.

### Train

Sapporo - Otaru 1h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

### Snow Light Path Festival Visit

Otaru

Enjoy a visit to this magical winter festival. Walk along the town's scenic canal and admire the glittering lanterns that line the route and the candles that float on the water. Head to the Temiyasen Kaijo area to see illuminated snow statues and sample winter treats at the food stalls.

### Train

Otaru - Sapporo 1h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

## Day 11 Sapporo/Noboribetsu

Travel to nearby Noboribetsu. Go for an easy hike through Jigokudani Park to view the scenery and geysers, or opt to visit the onsen town's spas. Enjoy a stay at a traditional inn for the night, complete with dinner dressed in a provided yukata (cotton kimono).

### **Train**

Sapporo – Noboribetsu 1h15m

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

### **Jigokudani Park Visit**

Noboribetsu

Enjoy an easy hike through Jigokudani Park nicknamed "Hell Valley" for its steamy scenery. Take in the impressive landscape and see the areas geysers.

### **Optional Activities - Day 11**

#### **Onsen (Hot Spring) Visit**

Noboribetsu

Natural outdoor hot spring baths abound in Noboribetsu. Take your pick and experience the soothing waters of a traditional Japanese spa.

### **Meals included: Dinner**

### **Day 12 Noboribetsu/Sapporo**

Enjoy a free day to visit the snow festival or explore more of Sapporo.

Experience more of Sapporo with options to visit the Sapporo Beer Museum for a tour and tasting (complete with an optional all-you-can-eat-and-drink meal in the Beer Hall) or travel to the top of the Sapporo TV Tower for a new vantage point.

### **Free Time**

Sapporo Full Day

Spend the day partaking in the snowy festivities or head to Niseko for some action on the mountains.

### **Local Train**

Noboribetsu – Sapporo 1h15m

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

### **Optional Activities - Day 12**

#### **Sapporo Beer Museum Tour**

Sapporo

Visit the Sapporo Beer Museum for a tour and tasting of the popular brew. Opt for a fun all-you-can-eat-and-drink meal in the Beer Hall.

### **TV Tower Visit**

Sapporo

Take a trip to the top of the Sapporo TV Tower and enjoy views of the city and festival from a new vantage point.

### **Sapporo Snow Festival Visit**

Sapporo

Experience the city transformed into a winter wonderland. Spread across several venues, the Snow Festival is one of the world's largest winter festivals and offers so much to see and do. Snap photos of the impressive snow and ice sculptures that line Odori Park and Susukino (be sure to check them out illuminated after dark), try out the snow slides at Tsudome, and savour the delicious festival food on offer.

### **Meals included: Breakfast**

### **Day 13 Sapporo**

Depart at any time.

Can't get enough snow? Book post accommodation and head to Niseko to experience Japan's world-class skiing and snowboarding.

### **Departure Day**

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

## **What's Included**

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Your Welcome Moment: Welcome Moment - Meet Your CEO and Group

Your Wellness Moment: Seninburo Hot Spring Visit, Hongū. CEO-led city tour of Tokyo. Orientation tour (Kanazawa). Ninja Temple visit. Minshuku stay with traditional meals. Instant Ramen Museum visit (Osaka). CEO-led city tour of Kyoto. Orientation walks in Osaka and Sapporo. Sapporo Snow Festival visit. Snow Light Path Festival visit (Otaru). Jigokudani Park visit. Minshuku stay (Noboribetsu). Internal flight. All transport to/from included activities and between destinations.

## Highlights

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Lay eyes on the glitz of Tokyo, hike past geysers in Jigokudani Park, go local at a traditional minshuku, Explore the secrets of the Ninja Temple, celebrate the season at the Sapporo Snow Festival

## Dossier Disclaimer

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VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## Itinerary Disclaimer

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While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## Important Notes

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### 1. Combo Tour

This tour combines with other G Adventures tours. As such, your travel companions may change during different sections of the tour.

### 2. Tattoos

Tattoos are not common or widely accepted in Japan. There is no cause for concern, but do your best to cover your tattoos when possible and note that you may not be permitted to enter public spas or onsens (hot springs).

## Group Leader Description

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All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by one of our Chief Experience Officers (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

## Group Size Notes

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Max 15, avg 12

## Meals Included

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3 breakfasts, 3 dinners

## Meals

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Eating is a big part of traveling. G Adventures knows that worldwide, local cuisines define the cultures. We think sampling regional delicacies are intrinsic to truly experiencing the country. We want you to be able to try foods according to your individual tastes, comforts, and budgets.

Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility. At times, meals will be taken together as a group. Other times, your CEO will point you in the direction of several delicious options, and you will have free time to pick and choose at will. Often in

Japan it is fun to get some snacks and beverages with the salarymen in the evenings at small restaurants, and other times it is fun to sit with a few friends at a sushi train.

Your CEO will always strive to cater for all dietary requirements/preferences, but please keep in mind that Vegetarianism/Veganism is very uncommon in Japan so this may mean a more limited selection for you.

Please refer to the Meals Included and Budget Information for information regarding included meals on your trip. Japan's kitchen is at your fingertips!

## **Transport**

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Train, public bus, subway, plane, walking.

## **About our Transportation**

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Japan's reliable public transportation is the best option for both the environment and for experiencing Japan like a local! We will ride several forms of transportation throughout the country, from Shinkansen bullet trains, to subways, funiculars, local trains, and buses. Note that often times we will have to carry our luggage from one mode of transport to another, so please consider this whilst packing.

## **Solo Travellers**

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We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## **Accommodation**

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Hotels (9 nts), farmhouse (1 nt), traditional inns (2 nts).

## **About Accommodation**

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Japan is one of the most populous countries in the world and space is at a premium. Therefore, hotel rooms are small! Additionally, most Japanese hotels do not have designated non-smoking rooms. Therefore, we ask hotels to deodorise rooms before check in.

Ryokan are traditional inns found across Japan. Featuring tatami floors (soft mats of woven straw), futon beds, Japanese-style baths, cotton kimono (casual robe worn to lounge around or to head to the bath), and elaborate meals (often served in the comfort of your own room), a ryokan is the perfect place to experience traditional customs and hospitality. As ryokan are usually top tier accommodations, most guests stay only one night, often to celebrate a special occasion or holiday. Don't be intimidated by the formalities inherent to a stay at a ryokan, your hosts will welcome you the same way they do all their guests. Have fun and enjoy this relaxing opportunity to learn more about Japan's unique customs.

Minshuku are Japan's answer to the Western bed and breakfast. Similar to ryokan, they have traditional features like tatami floors, futon beds, and Japanese-style baths. Minshuku are often family-run, and as such they offer a great opportunity to interact with local people and learn more about the nation's customs. More affordable and simpler than ryokan, minshuku tend to have smaller guestrooms, shared bathroom facilities, and any included meals (traditional, local, and delicious) are served in a communal dining room.

## **Joining Hotel**

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For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## **Joining Instructions**

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Hotel B Ikebukuro

Nearest station is Ikebukuro Station East Exit – Approximately 3 minutes walk to hotel B Ikebukuro. Take the east exit and turn left. You will see a Bic Camera and Yamada Denki on your left. Continue follow the road on Meiji Street a little farther on and you should see the Hotel on your left. It takes about 3 minutes from the station.

From Narita Airport, please take JR Narita Express for approximately 1 hour 30 minutes to JR Ikebukuro Station East Exit, or From Narita Airport You can also take Keisei Skyliner for approximately 1 hour 35 minutes to Nippori Station and transfer to JR Yamanote Line and get off JR Ikebukuro Station East Exit and walk for 3 mins.

From Haneda Airport – please take Keikyu Airport Ltd. Express to Shinagawa Station and then transfer to JR Yamanote Line and get off at Ikebukuro Station East Exit and walk for 3 mins to hotel.

If you have booked an arrival shuttle bus service with us:

Our local representative will be waiting for you with a sign with your name on it outside of the luggage hall.

Emergency Phone number : +81(0)479-85-7522

Transfer time from Narita airport to the hotel is approx. 2 hours, and from Haneda airport is approx. 1.5 hours, depending on the number of stops and current traffic conditions.

Luggage restrictions on the included shuttle bus:

Maximum 2 suitcases or boxes per person are allowed to be accommodated except below items:

- Ski equipment
- Golf set
- Snowboard

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned for that day other than your welcome meeting in the evening, so you can arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day during which no activities have been planned.

A G Adventures Representative will organize a short meeting on Day 1, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. A welcome note will be handed to you upon check in the hotel so you have all the necessary information regarding the meeting time. If you arrive late, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

## Arrival Complications

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We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

## Emergency Contact

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Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Office (Japan)

During office hours, Mon-Fri (Excluding national holidays) 9:00-18:00 Local Time

From outside Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6659-9074 (2nd contact +81 80 6779 1851)

From within Japan: 1st contact +81 3-6659-9074 (2nd contact +81 80 6779 1851)

After office hours emergency number

Primary phone: +81 80 6779 1851 (from within Japan: 080 6779 1851)

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## What to Take

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We suggest that you pack as lightly as possible as you are expected to carry your own luggage. Our trips in Japan use public transport and most transport has limited luggage storage space. You will also be



walking with your luggage in busy public train stations to catch connecting trains, so it is highly recommended that you travel light and have easy to handle luggage and capable of walking up and down the stairs with your luggage without any assistance. A large bag will be an inconvenience to you and will slow you down!

We recommend keeping the weight of your bags between 10-15kg/22-30lb. Suitcases are not recommended for G Adventures trips! Most travellers carry a backpack or rolling bag of small to medium size. You will also need a day-pack/rucksack to carry daily essentials like water, cameras, passport, i-pods etc.

Takuhaibin - Japan's takuhaibin service is a convenient and reliable way to transfer luggage from one location to another throughout the country. Pick-up/drop-off/delivery dates and times can be easily scheduled (usually overnight) and costs are moderate. Service can be arranged at most hotels and airports. Using takuhaibin to send your luggage between hotels, or from hotel to airport, is a great way to travel light and avoid hauling large bags on crowded trains or up and down stairs – just be sure to pack an overnight bag with everything you'll need until you're reunited with your luggage the following day.

## Packing List

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### Cold Weather:

- Long-sleeved shirts or sweater
- Scarf
- Snow Boots
- Warm gloves
- Warm hat
- Warm layers
- Warm waterproof jacket

### Conservative Dress:

- Modest clothing that covers knees and shoulders (Long pants, long skirts, shirts that cover shoulders)
- Shawl or scarf (for temple visits)

### Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

### Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

Winter Weather:

- Warm winter coat
- Waterproof gloves
- Waterproof pants
- Winter boots/shoes

## Laundry

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Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels but this is very expensive. Your leader can show you self service coin laundries in larger cities. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## Visas and Entry Requirements

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All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

## Detailed Trip Notes

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Travel in Japan is easy, clean, fast and efficient, however please be aware that English is still not widely spoken, however a lot of patience, a sense of humour and a respect for the local culture goes a long way in any Asian country and will greatly enrich your experience.

## Spending Money

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Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## Money Exchange

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As currency exchange rates in Asia fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com).

Every Post Office and 7-11 Convenience store has an ATM machine that accepts Visa, Mastercard and Debit Cards. At times, Maestro/Master Card/Cirrus have been problematic at these machines, so please bring a back-up card.

Credit Cards should not be relied upon for purchases as they are not widely accepted, except in some restaurants and department stores. Money can be exchanged at Post Offices and some banks and hotels in major cities, however it can be a very slow process.

## Emergency Fund

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Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## Departure Tax

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Departure tax is included in all international and domestic flight tickets.

## Tipping

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Tipping is not practiced in Japan. Leaving money at restaurants, in taxis etc will simply cause confusion!

Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is highly appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline \$5 USD per person, per day can be used.

## Optional Activities

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We suggest you bring along USD 100 - 150 for additional sightseeing.

## Health

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Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical information pertaining to the country you are travelling to well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as a full supply of any personal medical requirements. In Asia, you will not find the same drugs as you get at home. Please be aware that sometimes we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities. Also note that for legal reasons our Leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings for trip specific information. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if, in the reasonable opinion of the CEO, they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## Safety and Security

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Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## Trip Specific Safety

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## A Couple of Rules

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Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

## Travel Insurance

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Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

## Planeterra Foundation - the non-profit partner of G Adventures

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Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## Local Dress

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In Asia the dress standard is more conservative than it is back home. In predominately Buddhist countries we ask that you dress respectfully and avoid very short shorts/skirts and singlets/tanktops when visiting temples or other holy sites.

## Feedback

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After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at [customersolutions@gadventures.com](mailto:customersolutions@gadventures.com) and we will send it on to you.

## Newsletter

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Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation - Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## Minimum Age

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You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## **International Flights**

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Check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.