

BIG FIVE

TOURS & EXPEDITIONS

Enriching Lives Through Distinctive Journeys



JAPAN

Travel Guide

The following general outline offers practical information, suggestions, and answers to some frequently asked questions. It is not intended to be the definitive guide for your trip. Be sure to check the reading list included here for more information.

Travel has a way of stretching the mind. The stretch comes not from travel's immediate rewards, the inevitable myriad new sights, smells and sounds, but with experiencing firsthand how others do differently what we believed to be the right and only way.

--Ralph Crawshaw

TOKYO - Elevation: 26 feet / Latitude: 35 33N / Longitude: 139 47E

Average Temperature												
°F	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	42	43	48	57	65	71	77	81	74	64	55	47
Average Precipitation												
in.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	2	2.8	4.2	5.1	5.7	6.9	5.3	5.8	8.5	7.6	3.8	2.1

HELPFUL HINTS

- If you get lost, write down your question and give the paper to a young person (they are more likely to know the language and help you).
- There is no custom of tipping waitresses, taxi drivers, etc.; however, inexpensive gifts go over very well in Japan (especially anything Americana).
- If you wear large sizes in clothing or shoes, bring all that you will need. They are very hard to find in Japan and very expensive.
- There is a 5% consumption tax on every product or service.
- Take a credit card with you!
- Take a matchbook from your hotel to show your taxi driver (sometimes the name and address are on it). Or if you say the name of the hotel slowly followed by the word "hotearoo" which means hotel.

PASSPORT / VISA REQUIREMENTS

Passports: For international travel, a U.S. passport valid for at least six months from date of departure, containing **at least** two blank pages is necessary.

Visas: U.S. and Canadian citizens do not require visas in advance. Citizens from other countries, consult the nearest Japanese consulate.

Important: Please look at your passport prior to travel to insure that:

- 1) Your passport is valid for at least six months after the date of travel.
- 2) You have sufficient blank pages for visa stamps that will be added as you travel in and out of various countries.

Please note: Pages reserved for amendments and endorsements can not be used for visas.

LUGGAGE

Traveling light is always the first and best rule! We recommend passengers limit their luggage to one medium-sized soft bag per person or two small duffle bags. In this security conscious era, airline luggage restrictions may change without notice. Also, luggage limits vary depending on ticket class, plane size, destinations, etc. It is always best to confirm with airlines for specific limitations.

Generally speaking, from the US, economy class passengers are allowed to check in two (2) normal size pieces of luggage (each piece measuring no more than about 62 linear inches, which means length plus width plus height), and not exceeding 70 pounds per bag.

Scheduled flights from other countries and within foreign countries generally limit luggage to 44 pounds total, plus one carry-on personal item. Further restrictions apply for

charter flights. We will advise you of those restrictions in your final documents.

Most airlines now allow only one carry-on bag in addition to one personal item such as a laptop or handbag. Most bags within the 22 x 14 x 9 (or, a total of 45 linear inches) size restriction will be considered legal carry-on size by major domestic U.S. airlines. Many US airlines check-in desks have sizing boxes within which your bag must fit. Obviously, no knives or cutting instruments are allowed in carry-on baggage. All luggage should have identification inside as well as secure baggage tags on the outside.

Please note that the US National Transportation and Safety Board now suggests that you do not lock your checked luggage. If a screener has to open your bag, the locks may have to be broken. This applies to flights within the US and international flights originating in the US. This, however, does not address other international travel issues. We suggest that you lock your luggage and bring a couple of spare locks in the event one or more are cut off. But the choice is up to each individual traveler to make.

CURRENCY

Note: Japan has a strong cash culture, and because of the low crime rate it is usual to see people carrying large amounts of cash with them. It is only recently that credit cards have begun to become more popular.

Currency: Japanese Yen (¥). Notes are in denominations of ¥10,000, 5000 2000 and 1000. Coins are in denominations of ¥500, 100, 50, 10, 5 and 1.

Currency Exchange: All money must be exchanged at an authorised bank or money changer.

Credit & Debit Cards: American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa other major credit cards are widely used. Check with your credit or debit card company for merchant acceptability. ATMs are widely available although many do not accept foreign credit or debit cards. They only operate during normal banking hours and weekend services can be restricted to Saturday morning. A wide selection of foreign credit and debit cards are accepted, however, at over 21,000 post office ATMs, which are generally open Mon-Fri 0700-2300, Sat-Sun 0900-1900. Citibank machines also accept foreign credit cards and are often open 24 hours.

Travelers Checks: These can be exchanged at most major banks, larger hotels and some duty-free shops. To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travelers are advised to take travelers cheques in Japanese Yen or US dollars.

Currency Restrictions: The import and export of local and foreign currency is unrestricted, subject to declaration of amounts equivalent to ¥1,000,000 or above.

Banking Hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1500.

YOUR HEALTH

For all health requirements and recommendations travelers should check with a local Department of Health clinic or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are no vaccinations required, but the recommended inoculations are: Typhoid, Polio and Booster.

TIME ZONES

All of Japan is in one time zone. Japan does not participate in Daylight Savings Time. Japan is nine hours ahead of GMT (Greenwich Mean Time).

INTRODUCTION TO JAPAN

Area: 377,864 sq km (145,894 sq miles).

Population: 127,130,000 (official estimate 2001).

Population Density: 336.4 per sq km.

Capital: Tokyo. **Population:** 8,130,000 (estimate 2000).

Geography: Japan is separated from the Asian mainland by 160km (100 miles) of sea. About 70 per cent of the country is covered by hills and mountains, a number of which are active or dormant volcanoes. A series of mountain ranges runs from northern Hokkaido to southern Kyushu. The Japanese Alps (the most prominent range) run in a north-south direction through central Honshu. The highest mountain is Mount Fuji at 3776m (12,388ft). Lowlands and plains are small and scattered, mostly lying along the coast and composed of alluvial lowlands and diluvial uplands. The coastline is very long in relation to the land area, and has very varied features. The deeply indented bays with good natural harbours tend to be adjacent to mountainous terrain.

Government: Constitutional monarchy. Head of State: Emperor Akihito since 1989. Head of Government: Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi since 2001.

Language: Japanese is the official language. Some English is spoken in major cities.

Religion: Shintoism and Buddhism are Japan's two principle religions. Shintoism is founded on myths and legends emanating from worship of natural phenomena. Since it was unconcerned with problems of afterlife which dominate Buddhist thought, and since Buddhism easily accommodated itself to local faiths, the two comfortably coexisted. Today many Japanese are adherents of both faiths.

Electricity: In eastern Japan, the voltage is 110V, 50 cycles/Hz. In western Japan, including Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka, it is 60 cycles/Hz. Most hotels offer a converter in the bathroom and some even have outlets to accommodate foreign appliances.

Phone Calls: To dial from Japan to the U.S., check you hotel rooms for proper codes and procedures. When dialing from the U.S. to Japan, you must dial 011, then 81 (Japan's code), then the city code (listed below) then the telephone number.
Tokyo- 3 Yokohama-45 Osaka- 6 Kyoto-75

Mobile telephone: The Japanese mobile network uses PDC (Personal Digital Cellular System) technology, which is not compatible with GSM or other mobile services. Visitors to Tokyo can hire handsets. Handsets can also be hired from a number of other companies in Japan.

Fax: Sending and receiving can be arranged at any hour at major hotels.

Internet: There are many Internet cafes in Tokyo and in the main cities in Japan.

JAPAN'S HISTORY

It is legend that Japan was founded in 600 BC by Emperor Jimmu, descendant of the sun goddess and ancestor of the present ruling family. About AD 405, the Japanese court adopted the Chinese writing system officially. During the 6th century, Buddhism was introduced. These two events revolutionized Japan's culture and marked the beginning of Chinese cultural influence. From the establishment of the first fixed capital at Nara in 710 until 1867, the emperors of the Yamato dynasty were the nominal rulers, but actual power was usually held by powerful court nobles, regents, or "shoguns" (military governors).

The first contact with the West occurred about 1542, when a Portuguese ship, off its course to China, landed in Japan. During the next century, traders from Portugal, the Netherlands, England, and Spain arrived, as did Jesuit, Dominican, and Franciscan missionaries. During the early part of the 17th century, Japan's shogunate suspected that the traders and missionaries were actually forerunners of a military conquest by European powers. This caused the shogunate to place foreigners under progressively tighter restrictions. Ultimately, Japan forced all foreigners to leave and barred all relations with the outside world except for severely restricted commercial contacts with Dutch and Chinese merchants at Nagasaki. This isolation lasted for 200 years, until Commodore Matthew Perry of the U.S. Navy forced the opening of Japan to the West with the Convention of Kanagawa in 1854.

Within several years, renewed contact with the West profoundly altered Japanese society. The shogunate was forced to resign, and the emperor was restored to power. The "Meiji restoration" of 1868 initiated many reforms. The feudal system was abolished, and numerous Western institutions were adopted, including a Western legal system and constitutional government. In 1898, the last of the "unequal treaties" with Western powers was removed, signaling Japan's new status among the nations of the world. In a few decades, by creating modern social, educational, economic, military, and industrial systems, the Emperor Meiji's "controlled revolution" had transformed a feudal and isolated state into a world power.

Japanese leaders of the late 19th century regarded the Korean Peninsula as a "dagger pointed at the heart of Japan." It was over Korea that Japan became involved in war with the Chinese Empire in 1894-95 and with Russia in 1904-05. The war with China established Japan's dominant interest in Korea, while giving it the Pescadores Islands and Formosa (now Taiwan). After Japan defeated Russia in 1905, the resulting Treaty of Portsmouth awarded Japan certain rights in Manchuria and in southern Sakhalin, which Russia had received in 1875 in exchange for the Kurile Islands. Both wars gave Japan a free hand in Korea, which it formally annexed in 1910.

World War I permitted Japan to expand its influence in Asia and its territorial holdings in the Pacific. The postwar era brought Japan unprecedented prosperity. Japan went to the peace conference at Versailles in 1919 as one of the great military and industrial powers of the world and received official recognition as the new international order. It joined the

League of Nations and received a mandate over Pacific islands north of the Equator formerly held by Germany.

During the 1920s, Japan progressed toward a democratic system of government. However, parliamentary government was not rooted deeply enough to withstand the economic and political pressures of the 1930s, during which military leaders became increasingly influential.

Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931 and set up the puppet state of Manchukuo. In 1933, Japan resigned from the League of Nations. The Japanese invasion of China in 1937 followed Japan's signing of the "anti-Comintern pact" with Nazi Germany the previous year and was part of a chain of developments culminating in the Japanese attack on the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941.

After almost 4 years of war, resulting in the loss of 3 million Japanese lives and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan surrendered on the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Harbor on September 2, 1945. As a result of World War II, Japan lost all of its overseas possessions and retained only the home islands. Manchukuo was dissolved, and Manchuria was returned to China; Japan renounced all claims to Formosa; Korea was granted independence; southern Sakhalin and the Kuriles were occupied by the U.S.S.R.; and the United States became the sole administering authority of the Ryukyu, Bonin, and Volcano Islands. The 1972 reversion of Okinawa completed the United States' return of control of these islands to Japan.

After the war, Japan was placed under international control of the Allies through the Supreme Commander, Gen. Douglas MacArthur. U.S. objectives were to ensure that Japan would become a peaceful nation with a democratic self-government supported by the freely expressed will of the people. Political, economic, and social reforms were introduced, such as a freely elected Japanese Diet (legislature) and universal adult suffrage. The country's constitution took effect on May 3, 1947. The United States and 45 other Allied nations signed the Treaty of Peace with Japan in September 1951. The U.S. Senate ratified the treaty in March 1952, and under the terms of it, Japan regained full sovereignty on April 28, 1952.

CAMERAS & FILM

Photography: Out of politeness, always ask permission before taking photographs of people. The same rule of thumb also applies to photographing places of worship, religious festivals, and rural homesteads.

Equipment: Bring cameras and lenses you are comfortable using. If you get new equipment before you go, do so as far in advance as possible. Shoot and develop at least a dozen rolls before departure to work out problems.

Lenses: A combination of fixed and/or zoom lenses with focal lengths from 28 mm to 200 mm is a good for general travel photography, although you can take excellent photographs with only a 50 mm lens. A zoom lens in the 70 to 200 mm range will help you capture the sights of the country. A macro lens is helpful for shooting close-ups, but a good set of extension tubes will work very well. A 2x converter is also a handy. Bring a small cleaning kit and blower brush to keep equipment clean.

Film: It's strongly recommended that you bring what you need with you. You will undoubtedly shoot more pictures than you planned. Even those not all that interested in photography will probably shoot one 36 exposure roll of film per day, and enthusiastic shooters will double or triple that

amount. Be sure film is fresh and, when possible, keep it refrigerated. A film speed of ASA/ISO 64 is an excellent choice for color slide film. Use this speed when possible rather than higher speed films. There is a noticeable difference in quality that it is worth the extra effort to keep your camera steady at a somewhat slower shutter speed than you would otherwise use. For color prints, there are several good choices, including Kodak and Fuji films (ASA/ISO 100 & 200) for daylight photography, ASA/ISO 400 & 1000 are good for lower light and nighttime situations.

Note: Recent news reports warn that new explosive detectors used in more than 100 US airports to scan checked baggage will ruin unprotected, unexposed film. This technology will eventually be in place at all airports worldwide. Experts suggest either carrying your film in your carry-on luggage and/or placing film in safety, lead-lined bags to prevent X-ray damage.

Batteries: Put fresh photo-quality batteries in your camera and other electric equipment before you leave and bring at least two sets of spare batteries with you. Your camera will be useless without them and batteries tend to be expensive.

DEALING WITH JET LAG

With the adventures of international travel come unavoidable inconveniences such as occasional lost luggage or bouts of jet lag. In fact, studies reveal that as much as 90% of long distance travelers experience a degree of jet lag. Jet lag describes that out-of-sorts feeling associated with long flights, particularly those across time zones. Symptoms and severity vary but may include drowsiness, fatigue, irritability, difficulty concentrating, headaches, insomnia, and swelling of the extremities.

The number of time zones crossed affects the severity of jet lag. The internal body clock follows circadian rhythm, which is controlled by the hypothalamus that processes nerve signals. That clock is designed for regular cycles of light and darkness. Depending on the number of time zones crossed, it may take several days for that rhythm to be restored.

But that is not the only influence. Other factors include cabin pressure, stale air, lack of humidity, and your overall physical condition at the beginning of your trip.

Although jet lag can not be completely avoided, there are some simple things you can do to help minimize its affects.

Consider the following for your next scheduled trip.

- Start your trip well rested with a good night's sleep prior to departure. Getting adequate rest before starting on your journey will help minimize the amount of catching up you'll have to do when you arrive at the destination. Once home, try to schedule a day of rest before returning to work.
- Drink plenty of fluids -- water and juices will help you to stay well hydrated. Seasoned travelers recommend that you carry a bottle of drinking water with you and drink eight ounces every hour.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine just before and during flights. Both possess diuretic properties that promote dehydration. Alcohol also causes drowsiness and contributes to feeling sluggish.
- Once settled onboard, reset your watch to the time zone to which you are traveling. This small act helps you begin adjusting to your destination's local time.

- As much as possible, create a dark environment during flight. Studies have shown that bright lights strongly affect individuals' body clocks. If necessary, try eye shades and earplugs to help block distractions and convince your body that it is nighttime. Closing window shades and turning off overhead lights may also help. Sleep on the plane if your flight has an early morning arrival time.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing and comfortable shoes that will help in the event you experience mild swelling. Experienced travelers often bring lightweight slippers to wear during flights.
- Although not always feasible, look for opportunities to walk around while in flight. Do simple isometric exercises (contracting and relaxing as many muscle groups as possible) in your seat. These will improve circulation, help promote increased alertness, and reduce chances of swelling.
- If you arrive in the morning, plan to stay awake. If possible, wait until the local bedtime to sleep. Many people swear that this is the key to how quickly they adapt to local conditions. You will sleep better and will be less likely to suffer insomnia than if you nap upon arrival.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

In addition to the many comprehensive and readily available guides produced by Lonely Planet, Fodor, Insight, The Rough Guide, and others, here are a few other titles that might interest you.

A HISTORY OF JAPAN

R. H. P. Mason, J. G. Caiger

In this newly revised edition of their classic work, Mason and Caiger trace the enthralling evolution of modern Japan from its early pre-history through the post-Cold War period to the collapse of the Bubble Economy in the early 1990s. New findings shed additional light on the origins of Japanese civilization and the birth of Japanese culture. Not merely a chronology of wars, imperial successions, and treaties, *A History of Japan* provides an in-depth analysis of the religion, culture, and arts of the Japanese people from the 6th century B.C. to the present. This contemporary classic, now updated and revised, continues to be an essential text in Japanese studies.

JAPAN: A MODERN HISTORY

James L. McClain

This provides a comprehensive narrative that integrates the political, social, cultural, and economic history of modern Japan from the investiture of Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1603 to the present. *Japan: A Modern History* integrates the everyday experiences of farmers, artisans, families, soldiers, and laborers into the general narrative. Throughout, the point of view is based in Japan, emphasizing the Japanese as makers of their own history. Professor McClain provides in-depth coverage of the early modern period and the subsequent emergence of new dimensions in all areas of Japanese life. Numerous maps, illustrations, chronologies, and a helpful glossary reinforce central themes and events.

LEARNING TO BOW: INSIDE THE HEART OF JAPAN

Bruce Feiler

Learning to Bow has been heralded as one of the most insightful books about the clash of American and Japanese cultures. Bruce Feiler recounts the year he spent teaching inside Japan's renowned school system: watching boys and girls learn gender roles, experiencing the impact of strict school rules, and understanding the roots of Japan's business success.

MAKING OF MODERN JAPAN

Marius B. Jansen

Magisterial in vision, sweeping in scope, this monumental work presents a seamless account of Japanese society during the modern era, from 1600 to the present. A distillation of more than fifty years' engagement with Japan and its

history, it is the crowning work of our leading interpreter of the modern Japanese experience.

FOR YOUNG READERS

THE BIG WAVE

Pearl S. Buck

Age Range: 8 to 12 - Kino lives on a farm on the side of a mountain in Japan. His friend, Jiya, lives in a fishing village below. Everyone, including Kino and Jiya, has heard of the big wave. No one suspects it will wipe out the whole village and Jiya's family, too. As Jiya struggles to overcome his sorrow, he understands it is in the presence of danger that one learns to be brave, and to appreciate how wonderful life can be.

COLORS OF JAPAN

Holly Littlefield, Helen Byers (Illustrator)

Japan's land, history, and culture are explored using colors. For example, red in the Japanese flag represents the sun and evokes the facts that Japan is sometimes known as the Land of the Rising Sun and traces its first emperor to the sun goddess. Each color's significance in Japanese life is explored. The Japanese letters for each color are printed on each page that describes the color. Beautiful watercolor illustrations enhance the information presented. The introduction includes a map of Japan as well as a world map showing Japan in relation to the rest of the world. This book can be a useful elementary school social studies text as well as an informative introduction to Japan. The illustrations make this an appealing factual book.

I LIVE IN TOKYO

Mari Takabayashi (author & illustrator)

Have you ever been to Tokyo, Japan? Far away, in the Pacific Ocean, Tokyo is a busy city of color, activity, celebrations, super gigantic buildings, and much, much more. In this city lives a seven-year-old girl named Mimiko. Here you can follow a year's worth of fun, food, and festivities in Mimiko's life, month by month. You'll learn about the Doll's Festival, riding the bullet train, the right way to put on a kimono, and Mimiko's top ten favorite meals—just try not to eat the pages displaying the delicious wagashi! Mari Takabayashi evokes the flurry and enchantment of daily life in Tokyo with exquisitely detailed illustrations and descriptions. Her love for the city of her birth blooms in every last glowing vignette.

CLOTHING/PACKING CHECKLIST

Check the items below to be taken with you on your trip. Additional items may be added in the blank spaces provided. This is not intended as an all-inclusive list, but only as a suggested packing guide.

CLOTHING – WOMEN

- Comfortable outfit for air travel
- Sandals or casual shoes
- Walking shoes or tennis shoes
- Rubber thongs (shower)
- Hat
- Windbreaker or jacket
- Pullover sweater or sweatshirt
- Long pants *
- Shorts *
- Socks
- Short sleeve shirts *
- Long sleeve shirts *
- T-shirts
- Pajamas
- Light-weight robe/cover-up
- Swim-suit/cover-up
- Casual slacks/skirt
- Blouses
- Belt(s)
- Underwear
- Scarves
- Costume Jewelry

CLOTHING - MEN

- Comfortable outfit for air travel
- Sandals or casual shoes
- Walking shoes or tennis shoes
- Rubber thongs (showers)
- Hat
- Windbreaker or jacket
- Pullover sweater or sweatshirt
- Long pants *
- Shorts *
- Socks
- Short sleeve shirts *
- Long sleeve shirts *
- T-Shirts
- Pajamas
- Light weight robe/cover-up
- Swim trunks
- Casual slacks
- Shirts
- Belt(s)
- Underwear

TOILETRIES

- Anti-malarial pills
- Vitamins
- Aspirin/Tylenol
- Motion sickness pills
- Short-acting sleeping pills
- Decongestant
- Antibiotic
- Lomotil / Pepto-Bismol
- Antacid
- Antibiotic ointment
- Insect repellent
- Sun screen/Sun block
- Lip balm
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Prescription medications
- Band-Aids
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste & toothbrush
- Feminine Hygiene supplies
- Dental floss
- Mouthwash
- Hairbrush/comb
- Razor
- Q-Tips/cotton balls
- Nail clippers
- Nail file
- Tweezers
- Make-up
- Hand lotion

CAMERA EQUIPMENT

- Camera/Lenses
- Plenty of film
- Lead Protective Film Bags
- Camera bag
- Lens filters
- Cleaning Fluid/Tissues
- Lens Brush/Puffer
- Extra Batteries/Charger
- Flash & Flash batteries
- Zip-lock bags
- Camera instruction book
- Stick-on labels for film
- Video Camera/Charger
- Blank video tapes

SUNDRIES

- Passport
- International Certificate
- Vaccinations-Health Card
- Airline tickets/vouchers
- Money Pouch
- Credit Cards
- Travelers Checks
- Small calculator
- Sunglasses
- Prescription glasses
- Eyeglass case
- Small Alarm Clock
- Converter/plug set
- Binoculars
- Small flashlight
- Sewing kit
- Small scissors
- Kleenex
- Handi-wipes
- Zip-lock bags
- Travel clothes line
- Pillowcase for dirty clothes
- Small notebook or journal
- Pen
- Deck of cards
- Books/Magazines
- Address book for postcards
- Photocopy of passport and airline tickets
- Hard candy
- Bandana
- Extra sm. Collapsible bag
- Neck pillow for airline travel

OTHER

***Clothing should be comfortable**

Notes: