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**Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan**

# 2025 FALL TAKAYAMA AUTUMN FESTIVAL

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**8 Nights / 10 Days • 17 Meals (8 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 4 Dinners)**  
**Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide**  
**October 05 – 14, 2025 • Tour Manager: Jo Lelepali**

**OVERVIEW:** The Takayama Festival is ranked as one of Japan's three most beautiful festivals alongside Kyoto's Gion Matsuri and the Chichibu Yomatsuri. It is held twice a year in spring and autumn in the old town of Takayama, and attracts large numbers of spectators. From delightful onsen hot springs to specially prepared, Kaiseki Dinners, this tour has something for everyone! Join us!

**VISIT:** Kansai • Nara • Uji • Kyoto • Kanazawa • Shirakawago • Takayama • Hakone • Tokyo

**TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:** Todaiji Temple • Nara Deer Park • Byodoin Temple • Fushimi Inari Shrine Nijo Castle • Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) • Stroll Through the Gion Geisha District JR Limited Express Train Ride • Shirakawago • Myozenji Temple Takayama Festival Evening and Daytime Floats • Takayama Morning Market Kami-Sannomachi • Oshino Hakkai • Owakudani • Hakone Ropeway • Lake Ashi Cruise Asakusa Sensoji Temple • Nakamise Shopping • Ameyoko Shopping

**HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES:** Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony Yuzen Dyeing • Hakone Yosegi-Zaiku Making • Sushi Making

**UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES:** Todaiji Temple • Byodoin Temple Nijo Castle • Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) • Shirakawago

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**DON'T MISS A THING!!  
WHISPER — Wireless Tour Guide System!**  
English narration directly to your ear!

\* Fares are per person, USD based on double occupancy and include all airline taxes and fees. Airline fuel supplements, taxes and fees are subject to change and tour member is responsible for any increases. Some airline-imposed personal charges, including but not limited to baggage, priority boarding and special seating, may apply. For details visit [www.tripadvisor.com/AirlineFees](http://www.tripadvisor.com/AirlineFees). After initial deposit, a \$75 per person Non-Stop Travel (NST) Cancellation Fee will apply. Group departures may be cancelled, if there are less than 24 tour members. Final payment to NST for "non-cruise/line" Air and Land Package must be made by money order or personal check. NST does not guarantee that all tour members will fly together with Tour Manager. Tour Manager assignments, number of meals offered on tour, tour price, discount, and the "final" cruise or tour itinerary are subject to change with/without notice. **NST reserves the right to correct errors or omissions including but not limited to, fares, fees, and surcharges at any time.** Deposit: \$500 per person. Final Payment Due: 05/28/25. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. † Early booking discount is per person. Purchase of NST's complete Air and Land Package is required. †† Earn rewards every time you refer a friend. For each "new-to-NST" customer you refer, both you and your referral can receive a \$25 discount off your next NST escorted group. **Special Assistance:** You must notify NST, at time of reservation, of any disability requiring special attention. NST reserves the right to cancel your booking or terminate your vacation if your special needs or disabilities are not suitable for the vacation or if you are not traveling with a companion who will provide all the assistance you require. **Wheelchair and electric scooter access outside of the USA is severely restricted.** 021325

**COMPLETE PACKAGE!**

Includes Roundtrip Airfare from Honolulu, 8 Nights Hotel, 17 Meals, Tips for Local Tour Guides and Bus Drivers, All Taxes & Fees

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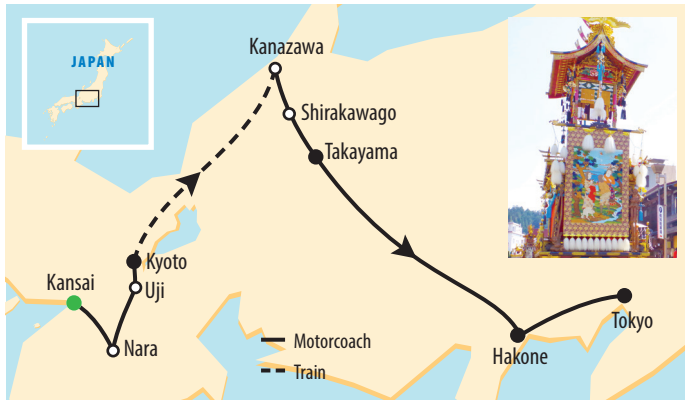
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**Day 1: Sun, Oct 05** – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #791 at 11:40 am.

**Day 2: Mon, Oct 06** – KANSAI. Arrive at Kansai International Airport at 3:50 pm. After entry formalities, walk to the hotel located within the airport. Enjoy dinner at the hotel. HOTEL NIKKO KANSAI AIRPORT (1 Night) (D)

**Day 3: Tue, Oct 07** – KANSAI – NARA – UJI – KYOTO. In the morning we will travel to Nara, the oldest capital city of Japan. Visit **Todaiji Temple**, the largest wooden building in Japan. The largest bronze statue of Buddha at 16.3 meters high and the surrounding **Nara Deer Park** is inhabited by **over 1,000 deer**. After lunch we proceed to Uji where we will visit, **Byodoin Temple**. Together with its garden, the temple represents the Pure Land Paradise and was influential on later temple construction. Byodoin was initially built in 998 as a countryside retreat villa for the powerful politician Fujiwara no Michinaga, not as a temple. On our way to Kyoto, we will visit the stunning vermilion colored **Fushimi Inari Shrine**, whose four kilometer long tunnel of scarlet torii gates was featured in the film *Memoirs of a Geisha*. After check in, explore the many restaurants and shops conveniently located near your hotel. MIYAKO HOTEL KYOTO HACHIJO (2 Nights) (B, L)

**Day 4: Wed, Oct 08** – KYOTO. Today we continue our tour of Kyoto, once the capital of Japan and still considered its cultural center. Begin the day by experiencing a **traditional Japanese tea ceremony**. Next, visit **Nijo Castle**. After the Tokugawa Shogunate fell in 1867, Nijo Castle was used as an imperial palace for a while before being donated to the city and opened up to the public as a historic site. Its palace buildings are arguably the best surviving examples of castle palace architecture of Japan's feudal era. Today's hands-on experience is **surikomi yuzen (brush dyed yuzen)**, which is one of Kyoto's traditional craft "Kyo-Yuzen Dyeing" techniques. Since the patterns are dyed by placing a paper stencil over a piece of fabric, such as a table mat you can make an authentic piece, even if this is your first time. Your very own original work will be a perfect memento for yourself or a gift for someone. Next, visit the famous **Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)**, a Zen Temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Formally known as Rokuonji, the temple was the retirement villa of the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. Lastly, take a **stroll through Gion**, the old **Geisha Quarter**. Our Local Tour Guide will have many suggestions for dinner. (B, L)

**Day 5: Thur, Oct 09** – KYOTO – KANAZAWA – SHIRAKAWAGO – TAKAYAMA. After breakfast, take a **JR Limited Express Train** to Kanazawa located on the shores of the Sea of Japan. Enjoy lunch in Kanazawa before we head out to **Shirakawago**. Ogimachi is the largest village and main attraction of Shirakawago. The village is home to several dozen well preserved gassho-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old. **Myozenji Temple**, which is unique for its thatched roof rather than the typical tiled roof seen on most temples, is connected to the Myozenji-ke farmhouse next door where the priest of the temple lives. Then, we continue on to **Takayama**, where a festival that dates to the 15<sup>th</sup> century will be heating up. Located amongst the Japan Alps it is known as "**Little Kyoto**" for its preserved historical structures. It was cut off from the rest of Japan for most of its history and thus has maintained a very unique and traditional atmosphere. This festival is held on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of October to give thanks for good harvest. The **highlight of the festival** is in the **evening when colorful dashi (floats) are led through the streets** amid cheers and drums. These ornate floats are decorated with intricate wood carvings and beautiful metal work that look even more amazing against the backdrop of fiery reds and oranges of vibrant autumn leaves. After dinner tonight, you'll have the opportunity to view the festive and evening floats. Return to the hotel after watching the festival and enjoy a restful soak in the **onsen hot springs** – which are divided for men and women. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. TOKYU STAY HIDA-TAKAYAMA MUSUBI NO YU (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

**Day 6: Fri, Oct 10** – TAKAYAMA. After breakfast we will continue sightseeing in Takayama, which includes the **Morning Market**. You can browse the market stalls for local crafts and fresh farm products. Takayama's Old Town has been beautifully preserved, with many buildings and whole streets of houses dating from the Edo Period (1600–1868). Enjoy the **Takayama Festival during the day**, as the floats parade through the town. Enjoy lunch on your own. After lunch, explore the **Kami-Sannomachi Area (Old Town)**, you can find many old homes, shops, coffee houses, and sake breweries, some of which have been in business for centuries. The remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure. Return to the hotel for dinner. (B, D)

## HAKONE KOWAKIEN YUNESSUN — AN ALL-WEATHER ONSEN AMUSEMENT PARK

### Yunessun Area (Swimwear Area)

- Open until 6:00 pm on weekdays. Tattoos are allowed as long as they are covered by a rash guard, band-aid, or tattoo cover-up.
- Outdoor Onsen Hot Spring with a Scenic View – Relax in 40 meter long onsens.
- Rodeo Mountain Water Slides – Experience the thrill of river rapids on three different exciting slides (minimum height requirement: 110 centimeter/3.6 feet).
- BOXAPPY's Jungle Gym and Splash Pool – Perfect for kids and families to play together.
- Cave Baths, Dragon's Waterfall, The Flowing Pool, Aegean Sea of Gods, Wine Bath, Coffee Bath, Dr. Fish Foot Bath, Green Tea Bath, Japanese Sake Bath, Green Terrace, and Finnish Sauna.

### Mori no Yu Area (No Clothing Area)

- Open until 8:00 pm on weekdays. Tattoos are not allowed.
- Open-Air Baths – Indulge in the open-air atmosphere and mountain scenery. Both male and female areas include a jacuzzi, shallow bath for lying down, and roofed area. A waterfall shoulder massage can be found in the male area, while a collagen bath is found in the female area.
- Indoor Bath – Relax in any weather as you view the surrounding mountains through the large windows.
- Saunas – Dry sauna invokes heavy sweating (male area only) and mist sauna that comfortably moisturizes skin and hair (female area only).

### Reserved Private Room with Baths

- Relish quality time along with your family or friends.
- Reservations are required. Tattoos are allowed.



**Day 7: Sat, Oct 11** – TAKAYAMA – HAKONE. After breakfast, depart Takayama for Hakone. After lunch, Visit **Oshino Hakkai**, a set of eight ponds located in the Fuji Five Lake Region. The eight ponds are fed by melting snow from the nearby slopes of Mt. Fuji. The melted snow filtered down through porous layers of lava for 80 years, resulting in a very clear spring water that is revered by the locals. Next to one pond, visitors can drink the cool water straight from the source. You'll have time to explore the many restaurants, souvenir shops and food vendors around the pond. Then transfer to the hotel in Hakone. Tour members are allowed to unlimited visits to nearby **Hakone Kowakien Yunessun**, an all-weather onsen amusement park, at no additional cost! Get your wristband, which will give you entry to Yunessun, at the hotel's front desk. Walk a short distance (three minutes) to Yunessun. The hotel wristband will allow you to enter without waiting in line, even when Yunessun is crowded! Get your one complimentary face and body towel and lounge wear (additional towels or lounge wear are at an additional cost). Enjoy food and beverages at Yunessun at your own expense. HAKONE HOTEL KOWAKIEN (1 Night) (B, L, D)

**Day 8: Sun, Oct 12** – HAKONE – TOKYO. After breakfast, travel to **Owakudani** ("Great Boiling Valley") and see the source of the hot spring waters of Hakone. Take in the view of the surrounding countryside from the **Hakone Ropeway**. Then enjoy a **boat ride on the beautiful Lake Ashi**. After lunch, try your hand at **Hakone yosegi-zaiku**, inlaid and mosaic woodwork unique to this area, and make a coaster. Then, proceed to Tokyo. KEIO PLAZA HOTEL TOKYO (2 Nights) (B)

**Day 9: Mon, Oct 13** – TOKYO. Day at leisure. Enjoy shopping and dining in the bustling Shinjuku Area. Your local Guide will be available to assist as needed. Perfect day to relax and/or visit with family and friends in Tokyo. (B)

**Day 10: Tue, Oct 14** – TOKYO – HONOLULU. After a sumptuous buffet breakfast embark on a full day of discovery! Start with a hands-on **sushi making class**, which will yield your delicious lunch. After lunch, travel to **Asakusa**, in the center of Tokyo's shitamachi (literally "low city"), one of Tokyo's districts, where an atmosphere of the Tokyo of past decades survives. Asakusa's main attraction is **Sensoji**, a very popular Buddhist temple, built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The temple is approached via the **Nakamise**, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries. Then visit **Ameyoko**, a busy market street along the Yamanote Line tracks between Okachimachi and Ueno Stations. The name "Ameyoko" is a short form for "ameya yokocho" ("candy store alley"), as candies were traditionally sold there. Today, various products such as clothes, bags, cosmetics, fresh fish, dried food, and spices are sold along Ameyoko. Transfer to the Haneda International Airport for our return flight home. Depart Tokyo via Japan Airlines flt #74 at 9:05 pm and arrive Honolulu at 9:35 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B, L)

UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Todaiji Temple (1998), Byodoin Temple (1994), Nijo Castle (1994), Kinkakuji Temple (1994), Shirakawago (1995).