



## off the **Beaten Path**: A Different Side of Japan

# 2026 CHERRY BLOSSOMS GRAND OKINAWA, KYOTO, NARA & OSAKA SHOPPING

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*Very Unique Tour Itinerary! Let's explore two diverse climates and cultures in one exciting trip!*

*The arrival of cherry blossoms is the highlight of the Japanese year. Young and old celebrate the fleeting beauty of these delicate flowers. Okinawa has a subtropical climate, which means it is the first place in Japan to enjoy the festivities. From mid-January to mid-February, dark pink blossoms bring joy to Okinawa's islands.*

**10 Nights / 12 Days • 19 Meals (10 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 5 Dinners)**  
**Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide**  
**January 30 – February 10, 2026 • Tour Manager: Wally Mau**

**OVERVIEW:** Okinawa is home to a unique culture that differs considerably from that of mainland Japan. Until the islands were invaded by the Satsuma domain (present day Kagoshima Prefecture) in 1609, Okinawa existed as an entirely separate country from Japan, known as the Ryukyu Kingdom. After the invasion, the Ryukyu Kingdom served as a tributary state to Japan, but continued to be governed by the royal family from Shuri Castle (Shurijo). It was not until 1879, a few years after the Meiji Restoration, that the kingdom was abolished and incorporated into Japan as Okinawa Prefecture. The castles of Okinawa, known as "gusuku" in the Okinawan language, are among the most vivid monuments that testify to the unique cultural and historical heritage of the Ryukyu Kingdom. In the year 2000, five castles and four related sites were designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites under the collective title of "Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu."

**VISIT:** Haneda • Naha • Onna • Kitanakagusuku • Nago  
Manza • Motobu • Nakijin • Nanjo • Kyoto • Nara • Osaka

**OKINAWA HIGHLIGHTS (5 NIGHTS):** Shuri Castle (Shurijo) • Ryusou Ryukyu Kimono Dress-Up Experience  
Ryukyu Mura • AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom • Awamori (Rice Liquor) Factory Tour  
Motobu Yaedake Sakura Festival • Churaumi Aquarium • Nakijin Castle Site • Michi-no-Eki KYODA  
Okinawa World • Habu (Snake) Museum • Gyokusendo Cave • Glass Factory • Shisa Painting Experience

**HOTEL COLLECTIVE (OKINAWA):** Luxurious accommodations right on Kokusai-Dori shopping street.

**KYOTO, NARA & OSAKA HIGHLIGHTS (4 NIGHTS):** Sanjusangen-do • Nijo Castle  
Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) • Wagashi (Japanese Sweets) Making Experience  
Traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony Experience • Fushimi Inari Shrine • Todaiji Temple • Nara Deer Park  
Kuromon Ichiba Market • Dotonbori Shopping • Shinsaibashi Shopping • Osaka Castle • AEON MALL

**UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES:** Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu  
Nijo Castle • Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)

### Non-Stop Travel Exclusive!

**HOTEL VILLA FONTAINE GRAND HANEDA AIRPORT** (Haneda Airport — 1 Night): The hotel is conveniently located just a one minute walk from Terminal 3. Japan is one of the world's leading onsen hot spring countries, and have long been loved by the Japanese for their ability to prevent disease, promote health, bestow beauty and anti-aging benefits, and soothe the body and mind. Shake the weariness of the 9½ hour flight as you relax in the onsen (for the nominal fee of 2,000 yen). Or get an introduction to Japanese convenience stores at Lawson (open 24 hours) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

## COMPLETE PACKAGE!

Includes Roundtrip Airfare from Honolulu,  
10 Nights Hotel, 19 Meals, Tips for Local Tour  
Guides and Bus Drivers, All Taxes & Fees

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\*Premium Economy class seating is for flights between Honolulu and Japan only. Domestic Japan flights do not offer Premium Economy class seating.

## EARLY BOOKING DISCOUNT PER PERSON<sup>†</sup>

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**Book by 08/29/25 & SAVE \$50**

## Non-Stop Travel Exclusive!

**DON'T MISS A THING!!**

**WHISPER — Wireless Tour  
Guide System!** English narration  
directly to your ear!

**Day 1: Fri, Jan 30** — HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #71 at 3:45 pm.

**Day 2: Sat, Jan 31** — HANEDA. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 8:10 pm. After entry formalities, walk to your hotel connected to the airport terminal. Enjoy a yakitori-don dinner at the hotel. HOTEL VILLA FONTAINE GRAND HANEDA AIRPORT (1 Night) (D)

**Day 3: Sun, Feb 01** — HANEDA — NAHA. After a breakfast buffet at your hotel, transfer back to the Haneda airport terminal. Enjoy a bento box at the domestic departure gate. Depart Haneda Domestic Airport via Japan Airlines flt #915 at 11:55 am and arrive at the Naha International Airport at 2:50 pm. Being your exploration of Okinawa with a visit to **Shuri Castle (Shurijo)**, the most important castle of the Ryukyu Kingdom, serving both as the central government office and royal residence. Although the main buildings of Shuri Castle were destroyed in a fire in October 2019, reconstruction to bring back the castle to its former glory is expected to be completed in 2026. Shurijo is the only castle in Okinawa that has been reconstructed. Only ruins remain of all the other castles. **Dress up in Ryusou Ryukyu kimonos** for a group photo! Transfer to the hotel. Walk to a nearby restaurant for dinner. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (1 Night) (B, L, D)

\*Baggage will be held at the hotel in Naha. Prepare an overnight bag for a one night stay in Manza.

**Day 4: Mon, Feb 02** — NAHA — ONNA — KITANAKAGUSUKU — NAGO — MANZA. After breakfast, we head north to Onna and spend the morning at **Ryukyu Mura**. It's basically a traditional Okinawan village with exhibits showcasing various festivals, crafts, and foods. Enjoy some performances and events held at the village, including multiple daily eisa taiko drumming performances. Then stop at **AEON MALL Okinawa Rycom** for shopping and lunch (on own). Next we visit an **awamori (rice liquor) factory**. Awamori is the signature alcoholic beverage of Okinawa and most of the Ryukyu Islands. Learn the unique process involved in making awamori. Enjoy dinner at the hotel tonight. ANA INTERCONTINENTAL MANZA BEACH RESORT (1 Night) (B, D)

**Day 5: Tue, Feb 03** — MANZA — MOTOBU — NAKIJIN — NAGO — NAHA. After an incredible breakfast buffet, depart Manza for Motobu. Attend the **MOTOBU YAEBAKE SAKURA FESTIVAL\*** and walk under a canopy of pink cherry blossoms. With the cherry blossom season in Okinawa typically lasting between mid-January and early February — you'll be one of the first to see cherry blossoms in Japan! Then visit to the **Churaumi Aquarium**, widely considered Japan's best aquarium. It is the main attraction of the Ocean Expo Park on the former grounds of the 1975 International Ocean Expo. The aquarium was completely redesigned and reopened in 2002. The highlight of a visit to the Churaumi Aquarium is the massive Kuroshio Tank, one of the largest in the world. The tank takes its name from the warm Kuroshio current which plays a large part in the variety of Okinawa's of marine life. Next, visit the ruins of **Nakijin Castle**. Learn about the history of Okinawa. The castle — a former residence of the Ryukyu Kingdom governor during the 14<sup>th</sup> century — is a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. On the way back to Naha City, stop at the roadside **Michi-no-Eki KYODA** for a chance to stretch the legs and get a little shopping done as well. Not only do they provide a clean and convenient rest stop, but you will find an array of farmer-direct merchandise along with other omiyage items. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. HOTEL COLLECTIVE (3 Nights) (B)

**Day 6: Wed, Feb 04** — NAHA. Full day at leisure. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. Perfect day to relax and/or visit with family and friends in Okinawa. Don't miss the out on the numerous shopping opportunities on Kokusai-Dori — including the Heiwa-Dori covered shopping arcade or the Don Quijote that is open until 3:00 am everyday! (B)

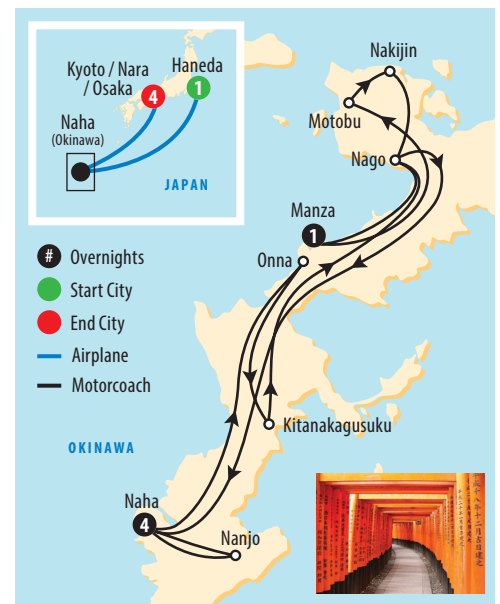
**Day 7: Thur, Feb 05** — NAHA — NANJO — NAHA. Another full day of exploring is ahead! Start the day with a visit to **Okinawa World** a theme park about Okinawan culture. The park's main attractions are a massive natural cave, a craft village and a **habu (snake) museum**. With a total length of five kilometers, **Gyokusendo Cave** is the longest of the many caves in the south of Okinawa Island and the second longest cave in the entire country. 850 meters of the cave are open to the public and feature spectacular stalactites and stalagmites. The **Kingdom Village** is a nice replica of a traditional Ryukyu village with workshops introducing the various traditional Okinawan crafts, such as weaving, dyeing, paper making, pottery, sugar cane processing, the making of music instruments, and the more recently introduced glass blowing. Colorful **Ryukyu glass** is one of those **must have souvenirs** when visiting Okinawa. Taking a tour of the work shop allows visitors to see how the craftsmen create their art. Hands-on experiences are offered at many of the workshops. Enjoy a buffet lunch while there. You'll then have your chance to **paint your own shisa** — a traditional Ryukyuan cultural artifact derived from Chinese guardian lions, often seen in similar pairs, resembling a cross between a lion and a dog, from Okinawan mythology. Shisas are believed to protect from some evils — with the left shisa traditionally having a closed mouth keeping good spirits in, while the open mouth shisa on the right traditionally wards off evil spirits. This evening enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B, L, D)

**Day 8: Fri, Feb 06** — NAHA — KYOTO. Depart Naha Airport via Japan Airlines flt #2084 at 12:00 pm. Arrive in the Itami Airport at 1:50 pm. Transfer to by coach to the hotel in Kyoto. The remainder of your day is at your leisure. Your hotel is surrounded by department stores, specialty stores, and restaurants. After check-in, explore the many restaurants and shops conveniently located near your hotel. Remainder of the day as at your leisure. A perfect opportunity to fulfill your shopping list. The Local Guide will have suggestions for dinner. MIYAKO HOTEL KYOTO HACHUO (2 Nights) (B)

**Day 9: Sat, Feb 07** — KYOTO. After a delicious Japanese/Western buffet breakfast at the hotel, embark on a full day of sightseeing beginning with a visit **Sanjusangen-do**, the Buddhist temple famous for its 1,001 statues of Kannon, the goddess of compassion. 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. After lunch, visit **Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)**, a Zen Temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Finally, **learn how to make wagashi** — traditional Japanese sweets, before returning to the hotel for dinner. (B, L, D)

**Day 10: Sun, Feb 08** — KYOTO — NARA — OSAKA. After breakfast, check out from hotel. A full day of sightseeing is ahead. On our way to Osaka, experience a **traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony**. View the stunning vermilion colored **Fushimi Inari Shrine**, whose four kilometer long tunnel of scarlet torii gates was featured on the film *Memoirs of a Geisha*. After lunch, visit the **Todaiji Temple** in Nara. Todaiji, the largest wooden building in Japan, houses the largest bronze statue of Buddha at 16.3 meters high. The surrounding **Nara Deer Park** is inhabited by over 1,000 deer. Evening in Osaka is at your leisure. The Local Guide will have suggestions on various dining and shopping opportunities nearby. HOTEL GRANVIA OSAKA (2 Nights) (B, L)

**Day 11: Mon, Feb 09** — OSAKA. Full day at leisure. A perfect day to fulfill the remainder of your shopping list. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)



**Day 12: Tue, Feb 10** — OSAKA — HONOLULU. After hotel checkout, start the day with a visit to **Kuromon Ichiba Market**, a lively covered market which stretches for 580 meters in Osaka's Chuo Ward. The market is famous for its fresh seafood, fruits and vegetables, meats, dried fish, pickles, and confectionery. Many stalls will prepare, cook and serve their food to you right on the spot! An excellent place to stroll, sample, and snack on a delicious variety of fresh market foods. Next, visit **Dotonbori**, one of Osaka's most popular tourist destinations, this street runs parallel to the Dotonbori canal. It is a popular shopping and entertainment district and is also known as a food destination. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. **Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade** and the surrounding area is Osaka's premier shopping center. Approximately 600 meters long, this area is unique as it combines chain retail stores and trendy boutiques with expensive department stores and top designer fashion labels. Spend time exploring **Osaka Castle**, arguably one of Osaka's most prominent landmarks. It's impressive structure can be seen from most parts of the city. The castle holds a place of great historical significance, as it played an important role in the unification of Japan that happened in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Toyotomi Hideyoshi initiated construction of the castle in 1583, intending it to become the center of a new, unified Japan under Toyotomi rule. It was the largest castle at the time. However, a few years after Hideyoshi's death, Tokugawa troops attacked and destroyed the castle, terminating the Toyotomi lineage in 1615. A final shopping stop will be made at an **AEON MALL** before transferring to the Kansai International Airport for our return flight home. Depart Kansai via Japan Airlines flt #792 at 10:35 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 10:40 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

**UNESCO World Heritage Sites:** Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu (2000), Nijo Castle (1994), Kinkakuji Temple (1994), Todaiji Temple (1998).

\* 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-cruiseline" 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: 09/22/25. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. □ Premium Economy class seating is for flights between Honolulu and Japan only. Domestic Japan flights do not offer Premium Economy class seating. † Early booking discount is per person. Purchase of NST's complete Air and Land Package is required. ‡ Cherry Blossom viewing is subject to weather conditions and is NOT guaranteed. †† 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.** 062425



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