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Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2026 SUMMER GRAND NIIGATA, SADO ISLAND PLUS TOKYO SHOPPING

Enjoy your choice of Japan Airlines' "Economy" or the affordable luxury of "Business" class service. Business class customers will begin their journey with a relaxing visit to JAL's "Sakura Lounge – Hale."

9 Nights / 11 Days • 20 Meals (9 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 6 Dinners)

Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide

June 18 – 28, 2026 • Tour Manager: Lee Ann LaFortune

HIDDEN GEMS OF JAPAN: There's more to Japan than the well-known destinations of Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka. After all, with over 43 prefectures, there are surely TONS of other hidden gems out there that will be worth your while! In fact, there is one stunning place that's yet to be discovered by foreign tourists, and that's a visit to the Niigata prefecture facing the Sea of Japan.

VISIT: Omiya, Niigata, Sado Island & Tokyo

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: JR Super Express Train Ride, Asahi Shuzo Sake Brewery, Knife Factory Tour, Yahiko Park, Yahiko Shrine, Yahiko Ropeway, Shirone Giant Kite Museum, Jet Foil Ride to Sado Island, Toki Forest Park, Obata Sake Brewery, Oni Daiko Performance, Kirarium Sado, Kitazawa Flotation Plant (Drive By), Sado Gold Mine, Tarai-bune Boat Ride, Shukunegi, Jet Foil Ride to Niigata, Minato Marche Pier Bandai, Niigata Saito Villa, Geiko Dinner, Northern Culture Museum, Sake Brewery, AEON MALL Niigata Minami, Asakusa Sensoji Temple, Nakamise Shopping & Ameyoko Shopping

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES: Sake Tasting, Kite Making, Soba Noodle Making Class, Senbei (Rice Cracker) Making, Mochi Pounding & Sushi Making Class

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KAISEKI DINNER —
With Geiko (Geisha) Performance!**

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Day 1: Thur, June 18 – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #783 at 1:35 pm.

Day 2: Fri, June 19 – NARITA – OMIYA. Arrive at the Narita International Airport at 4:45 pm. After entry formalities, transfer by coach to your hotel in Omiya. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. The hotel is conveniently located a five-minute walk from the JR Omiya Station, which is one of the largest stations in the Saitama prefecture. There will be various choices for shopping and dining at the train station. PALACE HOTEL OMIYA (1 Night)

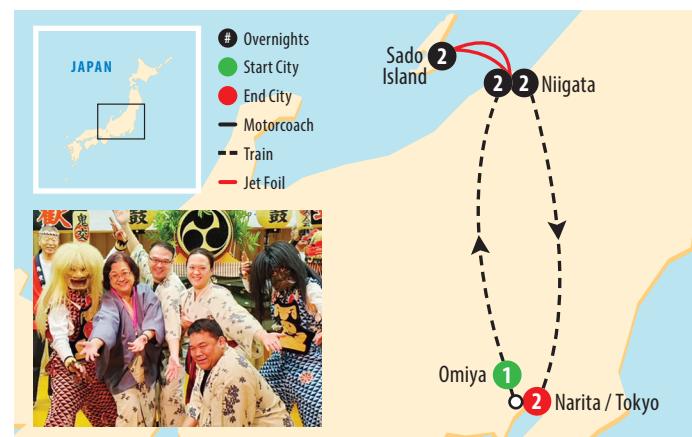
Day 3: Sat, June 20 – OMIYA – NIIGATA. After breakfast, transfer to Omiya Station. Ride the **JR Super Express Train** to Niigata Station. Upon arrival in Niigata, visit the **Asahi Shuzo Sake Brewery**, which was founded in 1830 in Niigata, the region with the second largest number of breweries in Japan. Since its founding, Asahi Shuzo has continued to brew sake under the “quality first” principle, using soft water drawn from pure underground streams that flow under the brewery, as well top quality rice from local farmers. Asahi Shuzo’s passion for using only Niigata-grown ingredients has earned them numerous awards in Japan and abroad. Take a tour the facilities, learn how their sake is made, and enjoy a **sake tasting**. Next, dine at the on site restaurant, where you’ll enjoy dishes made with the seasonal flavors of Niigata in mind. After lunch, visit a **knife factory at Tsubame-Sanjo**. Tsubame-Sanjo is known all over the country as the top maker of kitchen goods, and in particular kitchen knives. What makes Japanese knives so famous around the world? The knife blades give a sharper and more precise cut. This is your chance to own one of these skillfully honed knives for yourself! Transfer to the hotel. Relax in the hotel **onsen hot springs** before or after your multi-course **Kaiseki Dinner**. The onsens – which are divided for men and women – can be enjoyed indoors or outdoors. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. HOTEL OYANAGI (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 4: Sun, June 21 – NIIGATA. Begin the day at **Yahiko Park**, which offers visitors a taste of traditional Japanese scenery. Also visit **Yahiko Shrine**. Take it all in from the amazing vantage point of the **Yahiko Ropeway**! After enjoying lunch at a local restaurant, visit the **Shirone Giant Kite Museum** and learn how to **make a kite**. Return to the hotel for a different **Kaiseki Dinner**. (B, L, D)

*Baggage will be sent from Hotel Oyanagi to Hotel Nikko Niigata, skipping Sado Island. Prepare overnight bag for two nights.

Day 5: Mon, June 22 – NIIGATA – SADO ISLAND. Transfer to Niigata Port. Take a **jet foil to Sado Island**. Upon arrival in Sado, take a tour of the **Toki Forest Park**, a conservation park of crested ibis that allows visitors to see the endangered species close-up. Next, visit the **Obata Sake Brewery** for a tour and **tasting**. Transfer to the hotel. A special **Kaiseki Dinner** will be served at your hotel accompanied by an authentic **Oni Daiko (Demon Drums) Performance**. Don’t forget to try out the **onsens**. HOTEL YAHATAKAN (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 6: Tue, June 23 – SADO ISLAND. Begin the day at **Kirarium Sado**, the Sado Gold Mine Welcome Center, where you will learn everything you need to know about the gold mine. Take a drive by the **Kitazawa Flotation Plant**, before transferring to the Sado Gold Mine, to learn about the 400+ year history of the largest gold mine in Japan. Full-size dolls and robots provide accurate representation of the historic workings of the mine in the Edo period. In the museum, you can try to lift a pure gold bar, with a value of over 100 million yen, out of a clear box. Many have tried, but few have succeeded. **Make your own soba noodles** and eat your delicious creation for lunch. After lunch, take a **traditional tarai-bune boat ride**. The tarai-bune tub boats floating along the Ogi coastline are considered the symbol of Ogi. These boats are constructed out of cedar wrapped with bamboo on the outside, with a diameter of about 150 centimeters. Developed and used during Edo and Meiji periods, the tarai-bune tub boats, mainly operated by women, were ideal for tight turns and stability amidst the abundant reefs and coves along the Ogi Peninsula. These boats were originally used for collecting shellfish and seaweed from around the coast. Then visit the charming fishing village of **Shukunegi**, which is designated as a National Historic Site. Take a stroll along the narrow streets of Shukunegi to feel the history and experience the living conditions of people living during the Edo period. As this area was previously a trading port for ships going to Edo (Tokyo) and Osaka, many who lived here were ship carpenters and



sailors. Here, you will be able to find the popular sankaku-ya, which is a triangle-shaped house built to fit the shape of the land available at that period of time. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant before returning to the hotel for the evening. (B, L, D)

Day 7: Wed, June 24 – SADO ISLAND – NIIGATA. Take the **jet foil** from Sado Island to Niigata. After arriving in Niigata, explore **Minato Marche Pier Bandai**, a food market that offers a multiple of food options, including fish caught in the Sea of Japan, to vegetables and fruit delivered directly from farms, to Niigata-produced Koshihikari rice, a variety of high-quality sake from across the prefecture, and all kinds of Niigata’s specialties relating to food are here. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Then take a tour of **Niigata Saito Villa**. Built by a wealthy merchant, Saito Kijuro, in 1918, the villa was carefully constructed to provide the best view of the Japanese garden. Tonight, you’re in for a real treat!! Along with dinner, we are entertained by an authentic **Geiko**. Dancing, singing and playing fun games. HOTEL NIKKO NIIGATA (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 8: Thur, June 25 – NIIGATA. Begin the day making your very own custom-designed **jumbo senbei (rice cracker)**. Next, explore the **Northern Culture Museum**, where you’ll have lunch and **learn how to pound mochi**. Originally serving as a mansion of Ito Bunkichi, who lived in the Edo Period (1603–1868) and was one of the greatest landowners in Japan, nowadays, the museum houses calligraphy and ceramics, lacquer ware and documents related to Ito’s family history. You can also visit the garden; it is a “walking” garden with a big pond. After lunch, visit a **sake brewery** and learn about sake, how it is made, and **taste a few of their products**. Finally, stop at **AEON MALL Niigata Minami** where you will have free time to shop and dine (on your own), before returning to the hotel for the evening. (B, L)

Day 9: Fri, June 26 – NIIGATA – TOKYO. After breakfast, depart Niigata and travel to Tokyo via **JR Super Express Train**. Transfer from Tokyo Station to your hotel. Enjoy some time at leisure to explore the area around your hotel on your own before dinner. GRAND NIKKO TOKYO DAIBA (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 10: Sat, June 27 – TOKYO. Day at leisure. Perfect day to relax and/or visit with family and friends in Tokyo. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 11: Sun, June 28 – TOKYO – NARITA – HONOLULU. Begin the day with a hands-on **sushi making class**, which will yield your delicious lunch. After lunch, visit **Asakusa**, 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 7th 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. Transfer to the airport for your flight home. Depart the Narita International Airport via Japan Airlines flt #784 at 8:40 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 9:20 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B, L)

* 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. 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: 02/06/26. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. Hotaru no sato (firefly viewing) and Mt. Norikura snow wall visit is subject to weather conditions and is NOT guaranteed. ↑ 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 friend 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.** JI6522 122225