



2026 SUMMER KYOTO GION FESTIVAL

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Experience one of the oldest and greatest festivals in Japan!

9 Nights / 11 Days • 18 Meals (9 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches, 4 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
July 09 – 19, 2026 • Tour Manager: Laureen Chu

OVERVIEW: The Kyoto Gion Festival is one of the oldest festivals in Japan and one of the greatest. Traditional rituals and events related to this amazing festival are held throughout the month of July in Kyoto. Experience the Gion Festival and taste the wonders of Kyoto's history, crafts, and music traditions. The Gion Festival is considered one of Japan's top three festivals to feature floats. The others being Takayama Festival and the Chichibu Night Festival.

VISIT: Kansai, Himeji, Kurashiki, Okayama, Hiroshima, Miyajima, Nara, Kyoto, Kameoka, Arashiyama & Osaka

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Himeji Castle, Kurashiki Bikan Area, AEON MALL Okayama, Korakuen Garden, Peace Memorial Park, Peace Memorial Museum, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Atomic Bomb Dome, Children's Peace Monument, Ferry Ride to Miyajima, Itsukushima Shrine, Miyajima Ropeway, Shinkansen Bullet Train Ride, Todaiji Temple, Nara Deer Park, Sanjusangen-do, Nijo Castle, Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), Sagano Torokko Ressha (Sagano Romantic Train) Ride, Stroll Around the Arashiyama Area, Nishiki Market, Kyoto Gion Festival, Kuromon Ichiba Market, Dotonbori Shopping & Costco Shopping

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Momiji Manju Making, Yuzen Dyeing, Wagashi (Traditional Japanese Sweets) Making & Japanese Tea Ceremony

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES: Himeji Castle, Atomic Bomb Dome, Itsukushima Shrine, Todaiji Temple, Nijo Castle & Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)

COMPLETE PACKAGES!

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Day 1: Thur, July 09 — HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 12:45 pm.

Day 2: Fri, July 10 — HANEDA — KANSAI. Arrive at Haneda International Airport at 3:55 pm. After entry formalities, enjoy a bento box at the domestic departure gate. Depart Haneda International Airport via Japan Airlines flt #229 at 8:55 pm. Arrive in Kansai Domestic Airport at 10:15 pm. Walk to your hotel which is a short covered walk from the airport. **HOTEL NIKKO KANSAI AIRPORT** (1 Night) (D)

Day 3: Sat, July 11 — KANSAI — HIMEJI — KURASHIKI — OKAYAMA. After a sumptuous buffet breakfast, depart for Okayama. Enroute, stop in Himeji to visit **Himeji Castle**. It is known as “White Egret Castle” and “White Heron Castle” because of its brilliant white exterior, resembling a bird taking flight. It is the largest and most visited castle in Japan. It is a splendid example of traditional architecture. After lunch, travel to **Kurashiki** and explore its beautiful **Bikan Area**. In merchant days, this scenic town thrived as a port for rice shipments. Several old rice granaries and examples of historic architecture still remain, in addition to the picturesque stone lined canal. Finally, transfer to your hotel in Okayama. Enjoy free time to shop and dine at one of the largest AEON Shopping Malls, **AEON MALL Okayama**. **HOTEL GRANVIA OKAYAMA** (1 Night) (B, L)

*Baggage will be sent from Okayama to Kyoto, skipping Miyajima. Prepare an overnight bag for two nights.

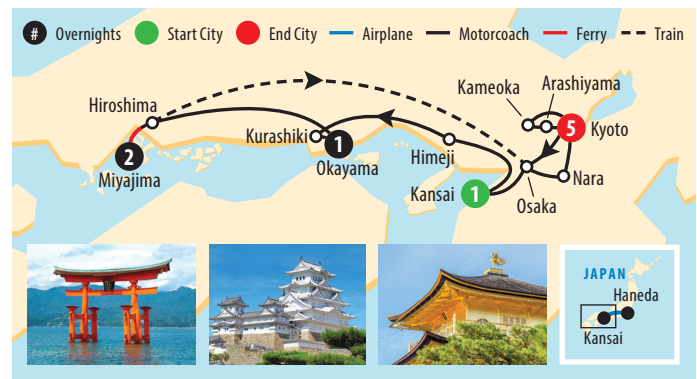
Day 4: Sun, July 12 — OKAYAMA — HIROSHIMA — MIYAJIMA. Begin the day walking through **Korakuen Garden**, a beautifully landscaped garden in Okayama. Korakuen Garden is viewed as one of Japan's three best gardens in Japan. Transfer to Hiroshima for a buffet lunch. Visit the **Peace Memorial Park**, **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum**, **Atomic Bomb Dome**, and **Children's Peace Monument**. Take a **short ferry ride** to the island of Miyajima, considered sacred by many. Walk to the hotel. This evening soak in the relaxing atmosphere of the **onsen hot spring baths**. You can enjoy the beauty of the primeval forests and gentle sound of mountain streams while taking a bath. For dinner, enjoy a traditional, multi-course **Kaiseki Dinner** featuring Hiroshima's local and seasonal ingredients including fresh seafood from the Seto Inland Sea. **IWASO INN** (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 5: Mon, July 13 — MIYAJIMA. After breakfast, begin the morning exploring **Itsukushima Shrine**. At high tide, the vermilion torii gate looks like it's floating in the middle of the sea. The shrine complex has been selected as one of Japan's Three Most Scenic Places (Nihon Sankei). After lunch, you'll **learn how to make momiji manju**, a specialty of the area. Next, take a ride on the **Miyajima Ropeway**, a cable car and gondola system linking Miyajima township to Mt. Misen. On a clear day the ropeway provides an excellent observation point, plus access to the Wild Monkey Park, temples, and shrines. Free time will be given to explore the excellent shopping available down the main street of Miyajima Island. Return to the hotel for another special traditional, multi-course **Kaiseki Dinner**. (B, L, D)

Day 6: Tue, July 14 — MIYAJIMA — HIROSHIMA — OSAKA — NARA — KYOTO. After a special breakfast, we make our way back to the “mainland” via a **short ferry ride**. Transfer to Hiroshima Station and take a **Shinkansen Bullet Train** to Shin-Osaka Station. Transfer to Nara via motorcoach. Visit the **Todaiji Temple**. It is the largest wooden building in Japan, and houses the largest bronze statue of Buddha that measures 16.3 meters high. The surrounding **Nara Deer Park** is inhabited by **over 1,000 deer**. After arriving at the hotel, the evening is at your leisure to explore more of the city on your own. **MIYAKO HOTEL KYOTO HACHUO** (5 Nights) (B)

Day 7: Wed, July 15 — KYOTO. After a delicious buffet breakfast at the hotel, embark on a full day of sightseeing beginning with a visit to **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, take part in today's hands-on experience: **Yuzen dyeing**. Since the patterns are dyed by placing a paper stencil over material, you can make an authentic piece, even if this is your first time. Finally, visit the **Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion)**, a Zen Temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Return to the hotel for a buffet dinner. (B, L, D)

Day 8: Thur, July 16 — KYOTO — KAMEOKA — ARASHIYAMA — KYOTO. After breakfast, travel to Kameoka, where you will board the **Sagano Torokko Ressha (Sagano Romantic Train)**. Next, spend some time exploring the **Arashiyama Area**, and shop for world-famous Arashiyama bamboo products. After lunch, **learn how to make wagashi** (traditional Japanese sweets). Finally, explore



Nishiki Market, a narrow, five block long shopping street lined by more than one hundred shops and restaurants. Known as “Kyoto's Kitchen,” this lively retail market specializes in all things food related, like fresh seafood, produce, knives and cookware, and is a great place to find seasonal foods and Kyoto specialties, such as Japanese sweets, pickles, dried seafood, and sushi. Most stores specialize in a particular type of food, and almost everything sold at the market is locally produced and procured. Return to the hotel for an evening of leisure. (B, L)

Day 9: Fri, July 17 — KYOTO. This morning we will explore the **Gion Festival** via public transportation (streets are closed to vehicular traffic). The Gion Festival is held at Yasaka-jinja Shrine and the highlight is the Yamaboko Junko Grand Parade — which is the splendid pageantry of some 30 floats called “yamaboko” proceeding along the main streets of Kyoto. Each float, two-storied and about six meters tall, is topped with a long pole shaped like a spear. Adorned with exquisite craftwork such as woven fabric, dyed textiles and sculptures, these floats are so gorgeous that they are often described as “mobile art museums.” During the parade, children wearing make-up and musicians playing the flute, drums, and bells are seated on the second level of the floats. This festival is believed to have started some 1,100 years ago when floats were made and paraded in the town to appease the deity of plague and illness. You will be joining thousands of people in the merriment by watching the performances and dancers, eating matsuri (festival) food, and listening to great taiko drums. (B)

Day 10: Sat, July 18 — KYOTO. Full day at leisure. Your hotel is conveniently located in front of the shinkansen, JR, and Kintetsu Kyoto Stations, and is surrounded by department stores, specialty stores, and restaurants. A perfect day to fulfill your shopping list. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 11: Sun, July 19 — KYOTO — OSAKA — KANSAI — HONOLULU. After breakfast, a full day of shopping is ahead! Begin with a traditional **Japanese tea ceremony** experience. Then we head 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! It is an excellent place to stroll, sample, and snack on a delicious variety of fresh market foods. Enjoy lunch here (on your own). Then visit **Dotonbori**, one of Osaka's most popular tourist destinations. Dotonbori runs parallel to the Dotonbori Canal and is a popular shopping and entertainment district and is also known as a food destination. Lastly, hope you didn't forget your Costco card, as we will be making a stop at **Costco**. Transfer to Kansai International Airport for your return flight home. Depart Kansai via Japan Airlines flt #792 at 10:05 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 11:00 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Himeji Castle (1993), Atomic Bomb Dome (1996), Itsukushima Shrine (1996), Todaiji Temple (1998), Nijo Castle (1994), Kinkakuji Temple (1994).

* 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-cruise” 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: 02/27/26. 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.** 101625

