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2027 SPRING OSAKA SUMO TOURNAMENT

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Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
March 14 – 23, 2027 • Tour Manager: Erik Wong

OVERVIEW: Grand Sumo Tournaments (Honbasho) are held six times a year across four major cities in Japan! Each tournament lasts 15 days, typically in odd-numbered months, starting in January. The **March Osaka Grand Sumo Tournament**, also known as Haru Basho (Spring Tournament), will take place from March 14 – 28, at the Edion Arena (Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium). This is the second major tournament of the year, featuring top-division makuuchi and juryo wrestlers. Makuuchi is the top division rank, fixed at just 42 wrestlers, while the juryo is the second highest division rank, fixed at 28 wrestlers. Once a wrestler is promoted to the rank of juryo, he is considered a professional with significant salary and privileges, as opposed to lower rankings that are "in training" and receive only a small allowance. With wrestlers being promoted and demoted based on their win-loss record, each match is a battle, as wrestlers fight to increase their ranking.

VISIT: Kansai, Nara, Uji, Kyoto & Osaka

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Todaiji Temple, Nara Deer Park, Byodoin Temple, Byodoin Omotesando, Kinkakuji (Temple of the Golden Pavilion), Sanjusangen-do, teamLab Biovortex Kyoto, Edion Arena (Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium), Osaka Grand Sumo Tournament, Chankonabe Meal, Expo '70 Commemorative Park, Dotonbori Shopping, Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade & AEON MALL

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Yuzen Dyeing & Tea Ceremony

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Day 1: Sun, Mar 14 – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #799 at 11:25 am.

Day 2: Mon, Mar 15 – KANSAI. Arrive at the Kansai International Airport at 3:55 pm. Walk to your hotel which is a short covered walk from the airport. Dinner has been arranged at the hotel. HOTEL NIKKO KANSAI AIRPORT (1 Night) (D)

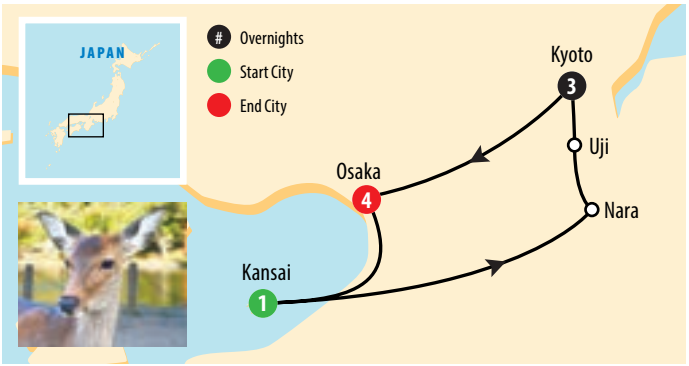
Day 3: Tue, Mar 16 – KANSAI – NARA – UJI – KYOTO. After breakfast, depart Kansai for Todaiji Temple in Nara. **Todaiji Temple** is the largest wooden building in Japan, which houses the largest bronze statue of Buddha, measuring 16.3m high. The surrounding **Nara Deer Park** is inhabited by over 1,000 deer. Will these deer "bow" to you for a cracker (sold on Nara Park grounds)? After lunch, 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 **Byodoin Omotesando**, the road leading up to the main gate of Byodoin Temple, are many long-established tea shops. The air is filled with the fragrance of tea. In 2001, the Ministry of the Environment recognized it as one of the "Top 100 Fragrant Landscapes to Pass on and Preserve." There are plenty of stores selling unique local products, as well as numerous restaurants and cafés where you can leisurely enjoy a menu full of tea-based dishes. One of the major attractions is the ability to enjoy authentic matcha soft serve ice cream while walking around. Continue to the hotel in Kyoto, for dinner, followed by an evening of leisure. MIYAKO HOTEL KYOTO HACHIJO (3 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 4: Wed, Mar 17 – KYOTO. Begin the exploration of Kyoto at **Kinkakuji (Temple of the Golden Pavilion)**, a Zen Temple whose top two floors are completely covered in gold leaf. Today's hands-on experience is **yuzen dyeing** (surikomi yuzen), which is one of Kyoto's traditional craft dyeing techniques. Since the patterns are dyed by placing a paper stencil over a piece of fabric, such as a tote bag, 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 a loved one. After lunch, explore **Sanjusangen-do**, the Buddhist temple famous for its 1,001 statues of Kannon, the goddess of compassion. Before returning to hotel for the evening, experience a **tea ceremony**. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. The Local Guide will be available to provide assistance and recommendations for nearby shopping and dining locations for you. (B, L)

Day 5: Thur, Mar 18 – KYOTO. Full day at leisure. Your hotel is located a 2-minute walk from Kyoto Station. The perfect day to fulfill your shopping list or explore more of Japan on your own. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 6: Fri, Mar 19 – KYOTO – OSAKA. Begin the day exploring the wonders of **teamLab Biovortex Kyoto**, a new concept by the team behind the international art collective teamLab. This venue focuses on a high-dimensional thinking athletics space based on the concept of perceiving the world with your body and thinking about it high-dimensionally. In a complex and challenging space, you will be immersed in a physically challenging four-dimensional world where time changes with the presence of your body. Transfer to the hotel located in Namba, Osaka's premier entertainment, dining and shopping district. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. Your Local Guide will have recommendations regarding shopping and dining nearby. CENTARA GRAND HOTEL OSAKA (4 nights) (B)

Day 7: Sat, Mar 20 – OSAKA. Enjoy a morning of leisure. In the early afternoon, depart for the **Edion Arena (Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium)**, where the **OSAKA GRAND SUMO TOURNAMENT**, also known as Haru Basho (Spring Tournament), is taking place. It is the results of these official tournaments, that determine the ranking and status of a rishiki (sumo wrestler). Since rank and status affects the privileges and pay that a wrestler receives, they are all eager to battle to improve their ranking by winning as many matches as they can during the 15-day tournament. Get comfortable in your reserved seats as you watch the sumo matches take place. While the tournament is broadcasted on NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), nothing beats being able to experience the excitement of being there in person, as the crowd sits in tense silence as everyone waits for the wrestlers to choose their moment to lunge at their opponent. When the days matches are over, depart the arena for dinner, where you will **"eat like a sumo wrestler"** with a **special chankonabe meal**. Chankonabe is a type of nabemono (Japanese stew or one-pot dish) commonly eaten in vast quantities by sumo wrestlers as part of a weight-gaining diet. The dish contains a dashi or chicken broth soup base with sake or mirin to add flavor. The characteristic of this hot pot is that there is no specific "recipe." And unlike other varieties of Japanese hot pot meals, meats, seafood, vegetables, and pretty much everything can be thrown into the hot pot. Chanko is a term used



to refer to all types of cuisine made by sumo wrestlers. The word chanko comes from combining "chan" meaning "parent" and "ko" meaning "child," and refers to the act of everyone – coaches and trainees alike – sharing the same meal together. After dinner, return to the hotel. (B, D)

Day 8: Sun, Mar 21 – OSAKA. Full day at leisure. The hotel is centrally located in Namba and is a short walk from popular shopping spots. Whether it's the latest fashion style, cooking utensils, or anime merchandise, the area has so much to offer – you're bound to find something that interests you! Sennichimae Doguyasuji (8-minute walk from the hotel) is known as the ultimate "kitchen street" for both the professional and amateur cook. It's where to go, to find all of your kitchen and cooking needs. Whether you're looking for the perfect set of chopsticks, a high-end knife, or even a takoyaki griddle, you will find the best selections here. Shinsaibashi-Suji Shopping Street (18-minute walk from the hotel), is one of the oldest and busiest shopping streets in Japan, drawing crowds of over 100,000 on the weekends. You can find almost anything from high fashion to traditional crafts on this mile-long street. While Ebisubashi-Suji (12-minute walk from the hotel) is a haven for younger shoppers seeking out the latest fashions. It caters to everyone, with a mix of popular street brands and independent accessory boutiques. Den Den Town (5-minute walk from the hotel) is the place to go for all things anime, manga, and electronics. Den Den town is Osaka's answer to Tokyo's Akihabara. Consisting primarily of two shopping streets running parallel: Sakaisuji is known for large retailers with every electronic item you can think of, while Ota-Road is more for the anime crowd. NAMBA Parks (2-minute walk from the hotel) is a massive 8-story shopping and office complex featuring 120 shops, a carnival mall, casual restaurants, fine-dining restaurants, and a landscaped garden located on the top floor. (B)

Day 9: Mon, Mar 22 – OSAKA. Enjoy a morning of leisure. In the early afternoon, return to the **Edion Arena (Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium)**. Get comfortable in your reserved seats as you watch more **OSAKA GRAND SUMO TOURNAMENT** sumo matches. At the end of the day's matches, return to the hotel for dinner. (B, D)

Day 10: Tue, Mar 23 – OSAKA – KANSAI – HONOLULU. After hotel checkout, explore the **Expo '70 Commemorative Park**, the former site of the 1970 World Exhibition, which was turned into a large public park. See **over 5,000 cherry trees in bloom** along the paths and large lawn areas. Next, visit Dotonbori and Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade, a couple of Osaka's most popular tourist destinations. **Dotonbori** is a popular shopping and entertainment district, and is also known as a food destination. **Shinsaibashi Shopping Arcade** and the surrounding area is Osaka's premier shopping center, where you can find chain retail stores, trendy boutiques, department stores, and top designer fashion labels in one place. Enjoy lunch in the area (on your own). 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 #790 at 10:10 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 10:25 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

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* 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 guarantees 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. Tour highlights and activities are subject to change. **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: 11/04/26. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. Cherry blossoms are subject to weather conditions and are 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 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.** JI7402 042826