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Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2027 SUMMER ADVENTURE

Minakami, Nagano, Niigata & Tokyo Shopping

From thrilling river rafting to historic cultural treasures, this unforgettable summer escape has it all!

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

9 Nights / 11 Days • 20 Meals (9 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 5 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
June 12 – 22, 2027 • Tour Manager: Calvin Sung

VISIT: Omiya, Minakami, Matsumoto, Nagano, Yudanaka Onsen, Tsubame-Sanjo, Niigata & Tokyo

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Takumi no Sato, Tanigawadake Joch by Hoshino Resorts, Firefly Viewing, Matsumoto Castle, Hotaka Shrine, Daio Wasabi Nojo, Zenkoji, Jigokudani Monkey Park, Tsubame-Sanjo Knife Factory, AEON MALL, Northern Culture Museum, Niigata Furusato Village, Tokyo Skytree, Sensoji & Ameyoko

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Soba Noodle Making, Minakami River Rafting^o, Cherry Picking, Daruma Doll Painting, Yukata (Summer Kimono) Dress-Up, Senbei (Rice Cracker) Making, Mochi Pounding, Dinner and Games with a Geisha & Sushi Making

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COMPLETE PACKAGES!

Includes Roundtrip Airfare from Honolulu,
 9 Nights Hotel, 20 Meals, Tips for Local
 Tour Guides and Motorcoach Drivers
 & All Taxes and Fees

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GUIDE SYSTEM** — Don't miss a thing!
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Day 1: Sat, Jun 12 — HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #71 at 4:35 pm.

Day 2: Sun, Jun 13 — HANEDA — OMIYA. Arrive at Haneda International Airport at 7:45 pm. After entry formalities, transfer by coach to your hotel in Omiya. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. Your hotel is just a short walk from JR Omiya Station, one of the area's largest stations with various of shopping and dining opportunities. PALACE HOTEL OMIYA (1 Night)

Day 3: Mon, Jun 14 — OMIYA — MINAKAMI. After breakfast, depart the hotel for Minakami. Upon arrival, learn how to **make soba noodles** and eat your delicious creation for lunch. After, spend some time exploring **Takumi no Sato**, an arts and crafts village set against the backdrop of Minakami's mountains, with more than two dozen workshops and stores. The area features a blend of traditional crafts, local dining, and rural scenery. Formerly known as the Tanigawadake Ropeway, go on an aerial journey on the **Tanigawadake Joch by Hoshino Resorts** offers stunning panoramic views of Mt. Tanigawa's 2,000-meter peaks. After arriving at the hotel and enjoying a buffet dinner, take a walk for **firefly viewing** as night falls. MINAKAMI HOTEL JURAKU (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 4: Tue, Jun 15 — MINAKAMI. You're in for a real summertime treat: **river rafting**!† From mid-June, lower water levels make it a fun, more relaxed adventure, with plenty of time to play in and around the boat while taking in the stunning scenery. If you prefer not to go river rafting, an alternate excursion will be offered to Michi-no-Eki Kawaba Denen Plaza, a large shopping and dining hub. After a delicious BBQ lunch, **pick cherries** at the peak of ripeness for a sweet afternoon treat! Return to the hotel for the evening, where a buffet dinner will be served. (B, L, D)

♦ All river rafting participants are **REQUIRED** to purchase travel insurance that will cover them during the rafting experience.

*Baggage will be sent from Minakami to Yudanaka Onsen, skipping Matsumoto. Prepare overnight bag for one night.

Day 5: Wed, Jun 16 — MINAKAMI — MATSUMOTO. Today, let's **paint our own daruma doll**! A daruma is a traditional Japanese wishing doll symbolizing perseverance, good luck, and support in pursuing a wish or goal. After lunch at a local restaurant, you'll have the chance to **dress-up in a yukata (summer kimono)**! Then, explore **Matsumoto Castle**, one of only five original Japanese castle keeps remaining. Its main keep is Japan's oldest surviving wooden castle tower, with a striking black lacquer exterior. Transfer to the hotel and enjoy a Western dinner. MATSUMOTO HOTEL KAGETSU (1 Night) (B, L, D)

Day 6: Thur, Jun 17 — MATSUMOTO — NAGANO — YUDANAKA ONSEN. This morning, visit **Hotaka Shrine**, a major Shinto shrine revered as the guardian shrine of the Japanese Alps and known for its serene sacred forest of ancient cedars. Next, visit **Daio Wasabi Nojo** for lunch (on your own). Be sure to try the wasabi-flavored soft cream! Then, explore **Zenkoji**, one of Japan's most important Buddhist temples and home to the first Buddhist statue ever brought into the country. This year, it will celebrate Gokaicho, a major Buddhist ceremony held once every seven years, when the Maedachi Honzon — a replica of the original hidden Buddhist statue — is displayed for public worship in the main hall. Enjoy dinner at the ryokan (traditional Japanese inn) and soak your body in the natural **onsen hot springs**, which can be enjoyed indoors or outdoors. ISSA NO KOMICHI BIYU NO YADO (1 Night) (B, D)

Day 7: Fri, Jun 18 — YUDANAKA ONSEN — TSUBAME-SANJO — NIIGATA. Start the day with a visit to **Jigokudani Monkey Park**, home to Japanese macaques. Watch the wild monkeys go about their daily lives, including bathing in the onsen hot springs. After lunch at a local restaurant, visit a **Tsubame-Sanjo knife factory** and discover why this region's exceptionally sharp kitchen knives are renowned across Japan. Finally, spend some free time at an **AEON MALL** to shop and enjoy dinner (on your own), before arriving at the hotel. HOTEL NIKKO NIIGATA (2 Nights) (B, L)



Day 8: Sat, Jun 19 — NIIGATA. Begin the day making your very own custom-designed **senbei (rice cracker)**. Next, visit the **Northern Culture Museum**, a former mansion of Ito Bunkichi, one of Japan's greatest landowners, showcasing art, family artifacts, and a scenic garden. While here, learn how to **pound mochi** — it's not as easy as it looks! Enjoy your fresh mochi with a specially prepared hagama (rice cooked in traditional cast iron pot) lunch. Then spend some time at the **Niigata Furusato Village**, a culture and tourism facility that provides a mix of shopping and dining opportunities, including specialty products from around Niigata. Tonight, you're in for a treat! Along with dinner, we are entertained by an authentic **geisha** — dancing, singing, and playing fun games! (B, L, D)

Day 9: Sun, Jun 20 — NIIGATA — TOKYO. After breakfast, depart Niigata and travel to Tokyo by JR Super Express Train. Upon arrival in Japan's capital, take in sweeping views of the city from **Tokyo Skytree**, Tokyo's tallest tower. From the Tembo Deck, 350 meters above the ground, enjoy a 360° panoramic view of Tokyo. After, transfer to your hotel where the remainder of the day is at your leisure. KEIO PLAZA HOTEL TOKYO (2 Nights) (B)

Day 10: Mon, Jun 21 — TOKYO. Enjoy a full day at leisure. Your hotel is located in the bustling Shinjuku district, directly connected to the underground passage of Shinjuku Station's West Exit (about a five-minute walk away) and near Tochomae Station (about a two-minute walk away). It offers easy access to major shopping areas and natural sights. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 11: Tue, Jun 22 — TOKYO — HANEDA — HONOLULU. Begin the day with a hands-on **sushi making** class, which will yield your delicious lunch. After, visit the Asakusa district, where the charm of old Tokyo still lives on. Its star attraction is **Sensoji**, a beloved 7th century Buddhist temple, also known as Asakusa Kannon Temple. Finally, explore **Ameyoko**, a bustling market street that features over 400 shops and stalls known for offering significant bargains on various products such as clothes, bags, cosmetics, dried seafood, spices, and more. Transfer to Haneda International Airport for the flight home. Depart Haneda via Japan Airlines flt #72 at 9:55 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 10:35 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B, L)

† 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.**