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Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2025 CHERRY BLOSSOMS SADO ISLAND, SNOW MONKEYS, NAGOYA, HAKONE & TOKYO

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Onsen hot springs experiences with seasonal Kaiseki Dinners on Sado Island, Nagano, and Hakone! Travel roundtrip from Tokyo!

10 Nights / 12 Days • 21 Meals (10 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 7 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
April 05 – 16, 2025 • Tour Managers: Mark & Debbie Nishiyama

OVERVIEW: One of Japan's largest islands, Sado Island has an interesting history. Its culture can be seen in its unique traditional arts and entertainment. Jigokudani, home of the world famous "snow monkeys," is situated in the valley of the Yokoyu River. 200 or so Japanese Macaque monkeys inhabit the area. Hakone, famous for its hot springs, natural beauty and the view of nearby Mt. Fuji, is one of the most popular destinations among Japanese and international tourists looking for a break from Tokyo. Tokyo is Japan's capital and the world's most populous metropolis and offers a seemingly unlimited choice of shopping, entertainment, culture, and dining to its visitors.

VISIT: Omiya • Niigata • Sado Island • Nagano
Matsumoto • Nagoya • Shizuoka • Hakone • Tokyo

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: JR Super Express Train Ride • Northern Culture Museum
Niigata Furusato Village • Jet Foil Ride to Sado Island • Oni-Daiko (Demon Drums) Performance
Sado Gold Mine • Tarai-bune Boat Ride • Shukunegi • Japanese Crested Ibis Conservation Centre
Jet Foil Ride to Niigata Port • Jigokudani Monkey Park (for Nagano Snow Monkeys) • Zenko-ji Temple
Hokusaikan Museum • Stroll around Obuse • Daio Wasabi Nojo • Matsumoto Castle • Toyota Museum
MOZO Wonder City • Noritake no Mori • Unagi Pie Factory • Michi-no-Eki Stand Kakegawa
Owakudani • Hakone Ropeway • Asakusa Sensoji Temple • Nakamise Shopping • Ameyoko Shopping

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Soba Noodle Making • Imayo Tsukasa Sake Brewery with Tasting
Strawberry Picking • Kimono Dress-Up • Green Tea Field and Factory – Pack Your Own Canister of Tea
Hakone Yosegi-Zaiku Box Making • Sushi Making

COMPLETE PACKAGE!

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10 Nights Hotel, 21 Meals, Tips for Local Tour
Guides and Bus Drivers, All Taxes & Fees

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Tour Guide System!** English narration directly to your ear!

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ONI DAIKO — Demon Drums Performance!

Day 1: Sat, Apr 05 – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 12:15 pm.

Day 2: Sun, Apr 06 – TOKYO – OMIYA. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 3:55 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)

*Baggage will be carried by truck from Omiya to Nagano, skipping Sado Island. Prepare an overnight bag for two nights.

Day 3: Mon, Apr 07 – OMIYA – NIIGATA – SADO ISLAND. After a sumptuous breakfast buffet at hotel, walk to the Omiya station. Transfer to Niigata by **JR Super Express Train**. Begin the sightseeing in Niigata with a visit to the **Northern Culture Museum**. Followed by free time at the **Niigata Furusato Village**, where you will have lunch (on your own). After lunch, transfer to Niigata Port. **Ride a jet foil to Sado Island**. Arrive in Sado Island and transfer to hotel in Sado. Enjoy a traditional multi-course **Kaiseki Dinner**, featuring ingredients unique to Sado Island. During dinner, watch a **Oni-Daiko (Demon Drums) Performance**. The onsen hot springs – which are divided for men and women – allow you to **enjoy the onsen hot springs** whether indoors or outdoors. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. HOTEL YAHATAKAN (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 4: Tue, Apr 08 – SADO ISLAND. After breakfast, depart on a full day sightseeing. Begin the day at the **Sado Gold Mine**. Next, **learn how to make 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 cm. Developed and used during Edo and Meiji periods, the tarai-bune tub boats, mainly operated by women, were ideal for tight turn 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**. The entire village is designated as a National Historic Site. Take a stroll along the narrow streets of Shukunegi Village 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. (B, L, D)

Day 5: Wed, Apr 09 – SADO ISLAND – NAGANO. Before departing from Sado, take a tour of the **Japanese Crested Ibis Conservation Centre**. Transfer to Ryotsu Port and **take the jet foil to Niigata Port**. En route to Nagano, take a tour of **Imayo Tsukasa Sake Brewery** to learn about sake and sample some of their tasty products. Enjoy dinner at the hotel. RYOKAN BIYUNOYADO (2 Nights) (B, D)

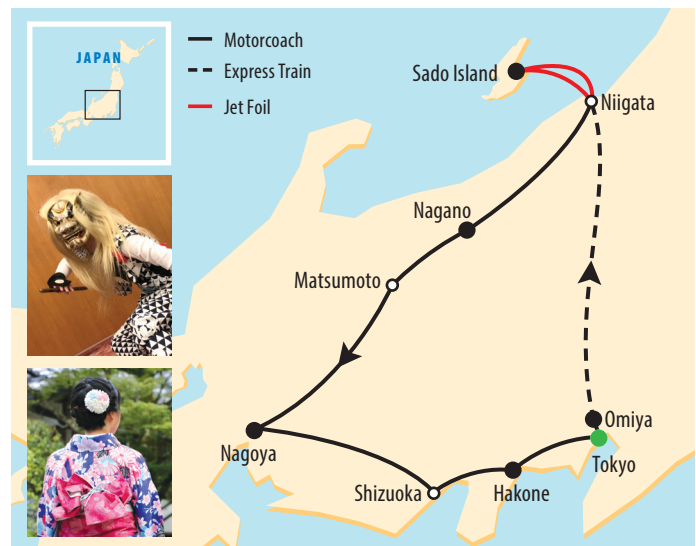
Day 6: Thur, Apr 10 – NAGANO. Full day sightseeing in Nagano by coach, starting with a visit to the **Jigokudani Monkey Park (for Snow Monkeys)**. Next, explore the grounds of **Zenko-ji Temple**. One of the most important and popular temples in Japan, Zenko-ji Temple was founded in the 7th century and stores the first Buddhist statue ever to be brought into Japan when Buddhism was first introduced in the 6th century. Have lunch (on your own) here. After lunch, visit a local farm and **pick some strawberries**. Enjoy these sweet treats as an afternoon snack! Learn more about Japan's most famous artist, renowned master of ukiyo-e woodblock prints, Katsushika Hokusai, at the **Hokusai Museum**. Said to have produced more than 30,000 artworks during his lifetime, Hokusai's great masterpiece – a great phoenix – adorns the ceiling of the Ganshoin Temple to this day. After taking a **stroll around Obuse**, return to the hotel for dinner. (B, D)

Day 7: Fri, Apr 11 – NAGANO – MATSUMOTO – NAGOYA. After breakfast, depart for Nagoya via Matsumoto. Along the way, stop at **Daio Wasabi Nojo**, the country's largest wasabi farm, for a tour of the farm and lunch. After lunch, you'll have the chance to experience **wearing a kimono** as you explore **Matsumoto Castle**. Depart Matsumoto for Nagoya. Enjoy dinner at the hotel. NAGOYA TOKYU HOTEL (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 8: Sat, Apr 12 – NAGOYA. Begin the day with a visit to the **Toyota Museum**. Stop for lunch (on your own) and shopping at **MOZO Wonder City**, one of the 10 largest AEON MALLS in Japan. After lunch, learn about Noritake, a leading ceramics company with over 100+ years of history, at **Noritake no Mori**. Built on the grounds of the Noritake's former factory grounds, Noritake no Mori includes a craft center, where visitors can observe how porcelain is created, and a museum, where examples of the items produced by the company throughout the years are displayed, a gardens, shop, café, and restaurant. Return to the hotel for an evening of leisure. The Local Guide will have suggestions for dinner tonight. (B)

*Baggage will be carried by truck from Nagoya to Tokyo, skipping Hakone. Prepare an overnight bag for one night.

Day 9: Sun, Apr 13 – NAGOYA – SHIZUOKA – HAKONE. Start the day at the famous **Unagi Pie Factory**, where the signature souvenir of Shizuoka Prefecture, Unagi Pies, are made and sold. This confection is a



unique elongated oval shaped pie resembling the historically famous eels of Lake Hamana. What is even more surprising is that it not only a shape but is made by kneading real powdered eel into the dough. Its crispy texture and balanced sweetness and richness spread in your mouth always making you want to go for another piece. Stop at the road side **Michi-no-Eki Stand Kakegawa** for lunch (on your own) along with a chance to get a little shopping done as well. Not only do they provide a clean and convenient rest stop, with quick and tasty food, but you will also find an array of farmer-direct merchandise along with other omiyage items. Shizuoka is a world leader in the production of Japanese green tea – with 40% of all of Japan's green tea being grown in Shizuoka. Wherever you go in the prefecture you will see row upon row of green tea hedges. After lunch, visit a green tea field and factory to learn about tea production. While there, **pack your own canister of tea**. What a great souvenir of your time in Shizuoka! Depart Shizuoka for Hakone, where much of the area is considered an active volcanic zone since its creation from eruption of Mt. Hakone some 3,000 years ago. Enjoy a buffet dinner at the hotel. After dinner, soak your body in the **healing onsen hot springs of Hakone**. The onsen hot springs – which are divided for men and women – allow you to enjoy the onsen hot springs whether indoors or outdoors. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. HAKONE HOTEL KOWAKIEN (1 Night) (B, D)

Day 10: Mon, Apr 14 – HAKONE – TOKYO. After breakfast, visit **Owakudani** ("Great Boiling Valley"), and see the source of the onsen hot spring waters of Hakone. Take the **Hakone Ropeway** and view the surrounding countryside. After lunch, learn how to make a **Hakone Yosegi-Zaiku box**. Transfer to the hotel in Tokyo. Walk to a nearby restaurant for a special izakaya dinner. GRAND NIKKO TOKYO DAIBA (2 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 11: Tue, Apr 15 – TOKYO. Full day at leisure. A perfect day to shop, dine, and explore Tokyo on your own. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 12: Wed, Apr 16 – TOKYO – HONOLULU. After a sumptuous buffet breakfast embark on a full day of discovery! Today's highlight will be a hands-on **sushi making session**, 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. Lastly, explore **Ameyoko**, a busy market street along the Yamanote Line tracks between Okachimachi and Ueno Stations. The name "Ameyoko" is a short form for "Ameya Yokocho" ("candy store alley"), as candies were traditionally sold there. Alternatively, "Ame" also stands for "America," because a lot of American products used to be available there when the street was the site of a black market in the years following WWII. Today, various products such as clothes, bags, cosmetics, fresh fish, dried food, and spices are sold along Ameyoko. Transfer to the airport for the flight home. Depart the Haneda International Airport via Japan Airlines flt #74 at 9:05 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 9:35 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.
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