

Signature Japan

DAY 1

ARRIVE TOKYO, JAPAN

Arrive in Tokyo, Japan's exciting capital. Transfer to your hotel, located in the upscale Roppongi District.

DAY 2

TOKYO | SPIRIT OF EDO

Today explore the Edo-Tokyo Museum, which was established to preserve the historic heritage of the city of Tokyo, and its precursor Edo, over the last 400 years. Then, visit Asakusa Kannon Temple, pausing in the tiny shops of Nakamise-dori. The colorful pagoda-style temple was completed in 645 and is dedicated to Kannon, the goddess of mercy in several East Asian spiritual traditions. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, and then continue to an exclusive local workshop that specializes in Japanese drum-making, and try your hand at playing the *taiko*. Afterward, return to your hotel with the remainder of your day at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

TOKYO | DESIGN YOUR DAY

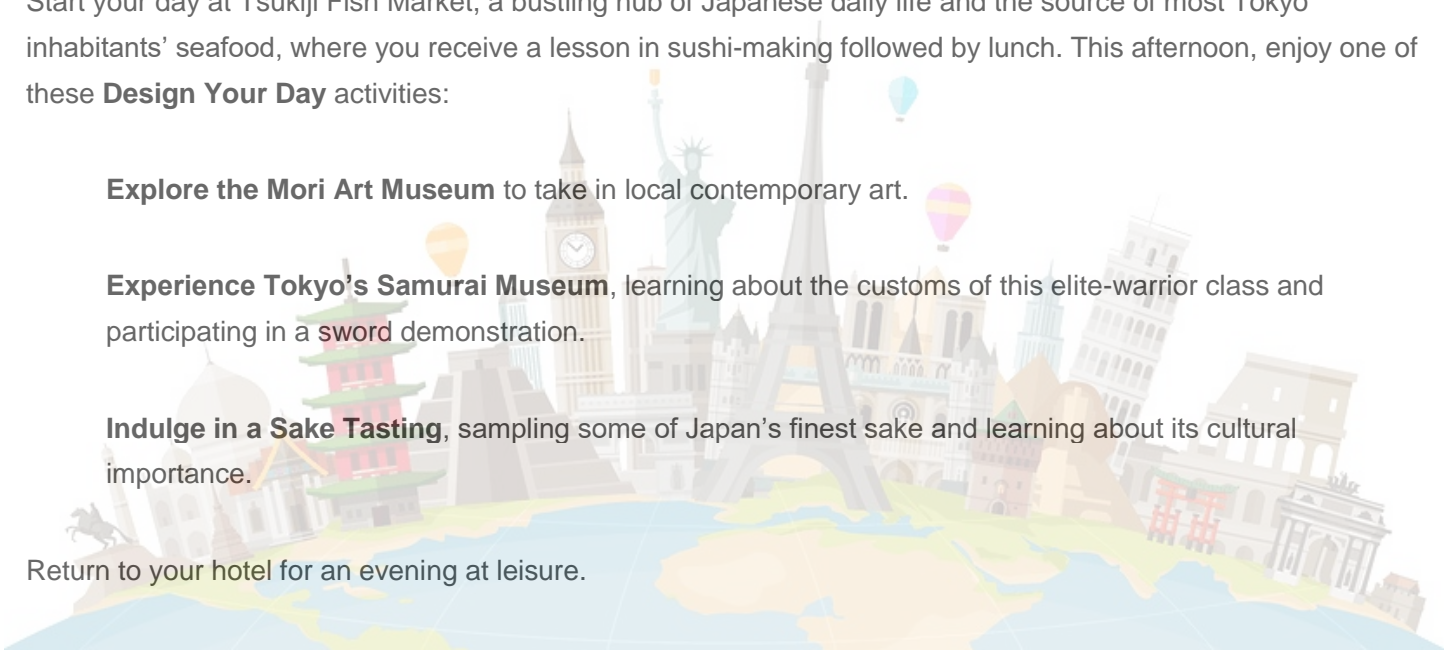
Start your day at Tsukiji Fish Market, a bustling hub of Japanese daily life and the source of most Tokyo inhabitants' seafood, where you receive a lesson in sushi-making followed by lunch. This afternoon, enjoy one of these **Design Your Day** activities:

Explore the Mori Art Museum to take in local contemporary art.

Experience Tokyo's Samurai Museum, learning about the customs of this elite-warrior class and participating in a sword demonstration.

Indulge in a Sake Tasting, sampling some of Japan's finest sake and learning about its cultural importance.

Return to your hotel for an evening at leisure.



Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4

HAKONE | STAY AT A TRADITIONAL RYOKAN

Travel to Hakone, among Japan's most popular hot-spring destinations, and view the forested slopes of Hakone National Park, an area encompassing coastlines, mountains, lakes and more than 1,000 volcanic islands. Board an aerial tram rising above the wooded slopes for inspiring views of Mount Fuji. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before strolling the grassy hillsides of The Hakone Open-Air Museum. Admire the impressive contemporary sculptures and artwork on display, including masterpieces by Henry Moore and Auguste Rodin. The museum also features one of the world's finest Picasso exhibits, presenting visitors with some 300 works by the cubist master. Tonight, enjoy unparalleled service at Gôra Kadan, an exclusive *ryokan* (traditional inn).

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5

OSAKA | BULLET TRAIN & DOTONBORI DELICACIES

After breakfast at your *ryokan*, head to the Okada Museum of Art to view its stunning collection of paintings, ceramics, lacquerware and bronzes from Japan, Korea and China. Then, Ride Like a Local by bullet train to Osaka. Historically known as a merchant city, it is today renowned as Japan's undisputed culinary capital, where diners indulge in everything from octopus dumplings to okonomiyaki — a battered, grilled concoction of chopped cabbage, meat or seafood, and seaweed, topped with mayonnaise. This evening, enjoy a wonderful foodie tour in the Dotonbori District, sampling dishes from the brilliantly lit and culinarily creative restaurants that line the street.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch


DAY 6

NARA | INSIGHTS INTO A PROFOUNDLY SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

Travel early this morning to Nara, Japan's first capital. Visit Todai-ji, a temple complex and UNESCO World Heritage Site that contains the largest bronze Buddha statue in Japan. Continue to Nara Park, home to hundreds of tame deer, venerated here as divine spirits, which you have the opportunity to feed by hand. Next visit the celebrated Kasuga Taisha Shrine. Conclude your Nara excursion with an exploration of the Naramachi District, comprised of winding Japanese streets and modernized merchant houses.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 7



KYOTO | THE GOLDEN PAVILION & BAMBOO GROVE

Travel to Kyoto early this morning to contemplate the iconic Zen rock garden at Ryoan-ji and glittering Kinkaku-ji Temple (Golden Pavilion). Covered in gold leaf that casts a shimmering reflection in the tranquil pond beside it, the temple exhibits three different styles of architecture — shinden, samurai and Zen — one on each floor. After lunch, explore the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, strolling along a winding path as sunlight filters down through towering bamboo shoots, considered by many a healing experience. Proceed to nearby Tenryu-ji Temple and its wonderful gardens before continuing to your hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8

KYOTO | HILLSIDE VIEWS AND TEA

This morning, visit Kiyomizu Temple, a celebrated Buddhist temple known for its stunning views of Kyoto. Marvel at the city from afar and enjoy the panorama of cherry and maple trees that come into color in the spring and fall. Proceed to a local temple, where you experience the art of the tea ceremony, noting its refined sense of hospitality and etiquette, which date to the time of the samurai. The remainder of the afternoon is yours to enjoy at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9

DEPART KYOTO

Transfer to Kansai International Airport or Itami Airport, both located just outside of Osaka, for your international flight home.

Meals: Breakfast

