



Self-Guided Tour Shikoku Tour



Shikoku Tour



Shikoku is the smallest of the four main islands of Japan, and it has its own unique culture and customs. A trip in Shikoku offers a more relaxing experience, complete with beautiful natural scenery, impressive sights such as feudal castles, hot spring baths, ancient religious sites, and a southern flair that cannot be experienced anywhere else in Japan.

Destinations:

- Okayama** - Korakuen Garden is one of Japan's 3 best,
- Kurashiki** - a preserved Edo Period town center along the willowed lined canal,
- Takamatsu** - Ritsuin Park, Konpirasan Shrine and Kanamaruza (an old Kabuki theater), and
- Matsuyama** - Dogo Onsen - one of Japanese oldest and most famous hot springs.

This 7 day tour begins and ends in Japan.

The price is US\$ 2,175 per person, including all transportation between destinations, accommodations, 5 breakfasts and 3 evening meals. This tour can also be combined with a tour of Kyoto, Nara or other famous sights in the Kansai Area, as it starts and ends in Osaka.



I hope the above has peaked your interest in this tour. If you have any questions or wish to sign up for a tour please your local travel agent.

Dates

Open - Self-Guided Tour

Prices

US\$ 2,175 per guest (2 guest minimum)

Meals Included

Breakfasts: 5
Lunches: 0
Dinners: 3

Duration

7 days

Guidance

Detailed materials as well as support from our experts in Japan will be available for this self-guided tour. No tour leader is supplied.

Highlights

An authentic feudal castle in Matsuyama, Konpirasan Temple in Kotohira, famous Japanese garden in Okayama, well-preserved Edo Period (1600-1868) buildings in Kurashiki, Dogo Onsen (one of the oldest hot spring areas in Japan), unique Shikoku-style architecture in Takamatsu.

Mode of Travel

Train ('Shinkansen' bullet train, limited express and local trains), ropeway and on foot.

Group Size

Minimum of 2 guests

Age Restrictions

Participants should be at least 12 years old. Everyone younger than 20 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Guest Comments

"I would like to commend you for the excellent preparations made for my family's Shikoku Tour. Although I was not able to join them, my wife and daughter enjoyed themselves thoroughly through out the seven-day tour. All of the accommodations were top class, and your self-guided tour instructions were very effective in helping them to get around all the interesting sights. Best of all was the assistance that they got from Takeo-san who went out of his way to be a very good host to them. I will certainly recommend services of Japan Roads to my friends who are planning to visit Japan."

-- CH, Bangkok, Thailand

Itinerary Details:

Day 1 – Himeji - Western Style Hotel - Western Style Room

- Arrive at Kansai International Airport
- Travel to Himeji City and visit Himeji Castle
- Stay in a city center hotel
- No Meals are included this day

After arriving in Japan you will be met by a member of Japan Roads staff and brought to Himeji. In Himeji you will have a chance to visit Himeji Castle which was founded in 1333 by Akamatsu Sadonori. The structure that you can see today was finished in 1581 though it has been restored from time to time over the years. It is one of the few remaining original castles in Japan and considered by many to be the most beautiful.



Day 2 – Kurashiki - Ryokan Lodging - Japanese Style Room

- Travel to Kurashiki
- Explore historic district
- Dine on fine Japanese cuisine at the *ryokan* (Japanese inn)

Finish your exploration of Himeji before heading to nearby Kurashiki. After stopping by your ryokan, you can explore the nearby historic district, willow-lined canal area with storehouses preserved since the Edo Period (1600-1868), before returning to your lodging for some fine Japanese cuisine and a relaxing bath.



Day 3 – Takamatsu and Kotohira - Western Style Hotel - Western Style Room

- Cross the Seto-Ohashi Bridge to Shikoku
- See Konpirasan Shrine and Kanamaruza (one of the oldest remaining Kabuki theaters) in Kotohira

Upon leaving Kurashiki, you will cross the Seto-Ohashi bridge, which was built in the late 1970s and 1980s in order to connect the main island of Honshu with Shikoku - it is one of the world's longest bridges at 13.1 kilometers (8.14 miles). After crossing into Shikoku and checking in to your city center hotel in the seaside city of Takamatsu, you will head to the nearby town of Kotohira. Here you will have the chance to see Konpirasan (also known as Kotohira-gu), a popular Shinto Shrine located atop a huge staircase. Afterwards, you can see Kanamaruza, one of the oldest remaining Kabuki theaters in Japan (Kabuki is a traditional form of theater with elaborate costumes, stage devices and music). Afterwards, you can return to Takamatsu and sample the local specialty food, Sanuki Udon, which is a thick, wheat-based noodle dish served in a clear broth.



Day 4 – Takamatsu and Yashima Peninsula - Western Style Hotel - Western Style Room

- Ritsurin Koen Park (Japanese Garden) in the morning
 - Shikoku Mura (Shikoku Village), an open air museum of traditional Shikoku architecture
- An early morning trip to Ritsurin Koen Park before the crowds arrive is just the thing to help you relax. This Japanese garden is one of the most beautiful in Japan, and was built by feudal lords during the Edo Period. Shikoku Mura, located to the east on the Yashima Peninsula, is an interesting open air museum that exhibits traditional buildings from all across Shikoku in a lovely park setting. If you have time, there is also a small museum of Western art in the vicinity.



Day 5 – Matsuyama - Ryokan Lodging - Japanese Style Room

- Travel to Matsuyama
 - Dogo Onsen hot spring area
 - Ishiteji Temple
- Overnight at a ryokan in Dogo Onsen with hot spring baths

You will stay in the Dogo Onsen (Dogo Hot Spring) area today, one of the oldest hot spring areas in Japan, located in the heart of Matsuyama City. The location is convenient if you are interested in shopping for traditional crafts or souvenirs in the nearby Dogo Shopping Arcade. But before you begin shopping, you will head to Ishiteji temple, an impressive temple that is number 51 of the "88 Temple Pilgrimage", the most famous religious pilgrimage route in Japan that circles around the entire island of Shikoku. The "Niomon" gate is at this temple is a national treasure, its three story pagoda and main hall are designated important cultural properties, and the architecture is in the style of the Kamakura Period (1192-1333).



Day 6 – Matsuyama - Ryokan Lodging - Japanese Style Room

- Matsuyama Castle
- Shopping at Okaido and Gintengai Shopping Arcades

Today you will see Matsuyama Castle, which is located in the center of the city on a hill and offers a stunning view of the metropolitan area and beyond (weather permitting). This is one of the most well-preserved of the few remaining feudal castles in Japan, and can be reached by using a ropeway from the bottom of the hill. Next, you can shop in the Okaido and Gintengai shopping arcades (both are connected), which includes a Takashimaya department store, one of the most famous and upscale of its type in Japan.

Day 7 – Return to Osaka - Tour Ends

- Return to Osaka

Today is the last day of the tour. You can either return to Osaka and go to Kansai International Airport to catch your homeward flight, or else continue on to other destinations you plan to visit.

Tour Accommodation:

Throughout the tour, you will have the chance to stay at Japanese style inns, or ryokans, as well as modern, Western style hotels. By choosing the best accommodations possible and offering both traditional and modern lodging experiences, Japan Roads aims to give you a deeper insight into life in Japan and make you as comfortable as possible. In particular, the traditional accommodations will allow you to have close personal contact with the Japanese owners and staff of these places, thus deepening your cultural experiences.

Sample Accommodations (may vary but will be of similar quality)

- Himeji: Himeji Castle Hotel (Western Hotel)
- Kurashiki: Tsurugata (Japanese Ryokan)
- Takamatsu: ANA Hotel Clement Takamatsu (Western Hotel)
- Matsuyama (Dogo Onsen): Kowakuen (Japanese Ryokan)



Cuisine:

To make sure you get the most of your Japan experience, Japan Road tours offer a wide variety of Japanese cuisine to enjoy. You will have the chance to dine on local specialties as well as traditional gourmet food offered in the ryokans.



About Self-Guided Tours:

The tour gives offers you the materials necessary to get to your destinations and see the most interesting sights available, while giving you the flexibility and freedom to enjoy things at your own pace. We provide you with the train tickets, lodging reservations made in advance, rail and walking maps, general cultural and etiquette tips, a suggest itinerary, explanations and history of the places you will visit, as well as other information you may need. Furthermore, cell phones provided for the duration of the tour will enable you to contact us if you need assistance.

This 7 day tour begins and ends in Japan.

Tour schedules are subject to change. If any changes should be made it will be done in the best interest of the travelers.
Japan Roads will at all times aim to offer you the most interesting tour possible.



Japan Roads
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