



## Golden Leaves of Japan

12<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2026

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### **12<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 1 – Departure**

Meet your tour leader at Malta International Airport at 13:00hrs to begin your exciting journey to Japan. After completing check-in and departure formalities, you will board your Emirates flight, scheduled to depart at 15:30 hrs. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the start of this unforgettable adventure.

### **13<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 2 – Welcome to Japan**

Konnichiwa (こんにちは)! Welcome to Tokyo, the vibrant capital of Japan! Upon your arrival at Narita International Airport (NRT) at approximately 17:35hrs, your driver will meet you and escort you to your hotel. After checking in, you can freshen up and relax. Later in the evening, a welcome dinner has been arranged for you, giving you the perfect opportunity to enjoy your first taste of Japanese cuisine and hospitality. The remainder of the evening is yours to unwind or take a brief stroll around the hotel area.

Overnight in Tokyo.

### **14<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 3 – Gardens, Culture, and Culinary Delights**

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel before heading to Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, a peaceful oasis in the heart of Tokyo. Explore the traditional Japanese garden with its ponds, bridges, and the elegant Kyu Goryotei (Taiwan Pavilion), as well as the formal French and English landscape gardens, enjoying the seasonal beauty of autumn leaves.

Next, visit Meiji Jingu Shrine, dedicated to Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken. Immerse yourself in Japanese culture, with the chance to witness a traditional wedding procession, observe the Purification Font rituals, and admire the serene surroundings of lush trees, ponds, and graceful bridges. Afterward, head to the Imperial Palace Outer Garden (Kōkyō Gaien) to stroll through wide green spaces, admire the iconic Nijubashi double bridge, and see the bronze statue of samurai Kusunoki Masashige.

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Continue to Shibuya Crossing and the Hachiko Statue, experiencing one of the world's busiest intersections and learning the story of the loyal Akita dog. For lunch, enjoy a meal at a local restaurant, followed by a visit to Tsukiji Outer Market, a vibrant foodie paradise where you can sample fresh seafood, tamagoyaki, and other Japanese delicacies.

Overnight in Tokyo.

#### **15<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 4 – Temples, Sumo, and a Scenic Cruise**

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel before heading to Senso-ji Temple (Asakusa Kannon Temple), one of Tokyo's oldest and most iconic temples, founded in 628 AD. Experience the heart of old Tokyo and its vibrant atmosphere, and capture memorable photos framing Senso-ji with the Tokyo Skytree, Japan's tallest tower at 634 meters. Explore the main gate (Kaminarimon), the bell tower, the Five-story Pagoda, and the main hall, all showcasing traditional Japanese architecture, rich colors, and exquisite carvings, while soaking in the deep Buddhist heritage. Next, visit the Tokyo Sumo Entertainment Show, where you can watch professional sumo wrestlers demonstrate powerful techniques and rituals, including foot-stomping (shiko) and salt-throwing. Guests can also try on a traditional sumo belt for fun, memorable photos. Lunch will be provided here, featuring a traditional sumo hot-pot (chankonabe).

After lunch, enjoy a scenic cruise from Hinode Pier lasting approximately 40 minutes. Glide under Tokyo's unique bridges and pass major landmarks while taking in the city from the water. The cruise connects historic areas like Asakusa with modern destinations such as Odaiba, offering a refreshing perspective of Tokyo. If time and energy permit, guests can explore Ginza on their own, or some may choose to return to the hotel directly.

#### **16<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 5 - Mount Fuji and Lake Kawaguchi Excursion**

After breakfast at the hotel, embark on a full-day trip to admire the stunning views of Mount Fuji, Japan's tallest and most iconic mountain. Begin at Arakurayama Sengen Park, where the five-story pagoda against the backdrop of Mount Fuji provides a picture-perfect setting. Take a short hike to Arakurayama Sengen Shrine, dedicated to the mountain god, and enjoy peaceful gardens and panoramic views from the Red Fuji Observation Deck. You will enjoy lunch with the rest of the group.

Next, visit Lake Kawaguchi, known for its clear waters reflecting Mount Fuji on sunny days, and explore the Kubota Itchiku Art Museum, showcasing exquisite kimonos designed by the master textile artist Ichiku Kubota. You can then enjoy a leisurely lake cruise, offering a unique perspective of Mount Fuji from the water. Later drive to Matsumoto, where you will check in to your hotel and rest.

Overnight in Matsumoto

#### **17<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 6 – Gardens, Castle, and Samurai Culture**

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a drive to Kanazawa for a half-day tour of the city's highlights. Begin at Kenroku-en, one of Japan's top three gardens, known for its spacious layout, tranquil atmosphere, water features, and scenic views. Stroll through winding paths to see Kasumigaike Pond with the famous Kotojitoro Lantern, the unique Neagari-no-Matsu (Root-lifting Pine), and the Hanami-bashi Bridge. Pause at Shigure-tei Tea House to enjoy matcha and traditional sweets while soaking in the garden's beauty. Next,

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visit Kanazawa Castle Park, the city's historic center, and admire the grandeur of the castle once home to the powerful Maeda family. You will enjoy lunch during the tour. Later in the evening we'll check in to the hotel and rest.

Overnight in Kanazawa

#### **18<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 7 – Samurai Streets and Gold Leaf Experience**

After breakfast at the hotel, visit Nagamachi Samurai District, a well-preserved area showcasing the lifestyle of upper-ranking Edo-period samurai. Wander its narrow streets lined with earthen walls and wooden buildings, and step inside the Nomura House to admire its harmonious garden, pond, and traditional architecture.

Next, explore Higashi Chaya District, Kanazawa's historic teahouse street reminiscent of Kyoto's Gion. Experience Edo-period high society at Shima Teahouse, enjoying tea and sweets, and don't miss tasting the famous gold leaf ice cream. Continue the cultural experience with a hands-on Gold Leaf Workshop, creating your own golden art on mirrors, chopsticks, or masks with guidance from instructors. You will enjoy lunch during the tour. Later you will embark on a drive to Kyoto, where you will check in to the hotel and rest.

Overnight in Kyoto

#### **19<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 8 – Temples, Geisha Districts, and Cultural Experiences**

After breakfast at the hotel, begin your day at Ryoan-ji Temple, home to Japan's most famous rock garden. Its minimalist dry landscape of 15 stones on white gravel offers a peaceful space for reflection. Next, visit Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion), a UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its top two floors covered in gold leaf and its shimmering reflection in the pond, perfect for photos and quiet contemplation.

Continue to Gion, Kyoto's historic geisha district, where you may spot geiko in traditional attire. Stroll through cobblestone streets, explore preserved machiya (townhouses) and ochaya (teahouses), and visit Yasaka Shrine, a guardian shrine of Gion known for beauty and wealth blessings. Wander up Ninenzaka and Sannenzaka streets toward Kiyomizu-dera Temple, stopping at local shops, cafés, and enjoying a geisha tea ceremony along the way. End the day at Kiyomizu-dera, a UNESCO World Heritage Site famed for its wooden stage overlooking the city, sacred waters, and remarkable architecture, including the Hondo, Jishu Shrine, Otowa Waterfall, and Tainai-Meguri room. You will enjoy lunch during the tour while later you will conclude the day in Kyoto.

Overnight in Kyoto

#### **20<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 9 – Shrines, Temples, and Nishiki Market**

After breakfast at the hotel, head to the northern suburbs of Kyoto to experience the city's ancient charm and natural beauty. Begin at Kifune Shrine, approached via a scenic pathway lined with rows of red lanterns. Dedicated to the water deity, the shrine offers a serene atmosphere with its hillside location, dense forests, and the soothing sounds of the Kibune River. Guests can try the unique "mizu-ura" water fortune-telling and explore the three main shrines: Main Shrine, Yui no Yashiro, and Okunomiya.

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Next, visit Sanzen-in Temple in Ohara, known for its moss-covered gardens, towering old trees, and tranquil streams. Stroll through Shuheki-en and Yusei-en Gardens to enjoy the seasonal beauty, from cherry blossoms in spring to autumn maple leaves and winter snowscapes. Afterward, return to the city center and explore Nishiki Market, Kyoto's vibrant food market, where you can sample local specialties such as Japanese sweets, fresh sashimi skewers, wasabi salt, and tako tamago. Guests will enjoy lunch during the day while experiencing Kyoto's culinary delights.

Overnight in Kyoto

**21<sup>st</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 10 – Spiritual Kyoto, Cultural Nara**

After breakfast at the hotel you will start the morning early at the iconic Fushimi Inari-taisha Shrine, famous for its endless path of vibrant vermilion torii gates. Explore the atmospheric trails, admire the fox statues symbolizing the god Inari, and enjoy the peaceful forest setting before the crowds arrive.

After your visit, depart Kyoto and drive to Nara, Japan's first permanent capital and a city rich in UNESCO World Heritage sites. Visit Todaiji Temple, home to the majestic 16-metre Great Buddha and one of the world's largest wooden buildings. Continue to Nara Park, where friendly deer roam freely, and make your way to Kasuga Taisha Shrine, celebrated for its thousands of stone and bronze lanterns. Lunch will be enjoyed during the day.

If time and energy allow, enjoy a gentle hike up Mount Wakakusa for panoramic views of Nara, especially beautiful during autumn foliage seasons. After your Nara explorations, drive to Osaka for your overnight stay.

Overnight in Osaka

**22<sup>nd</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 11 – Harbor Views, Chinatown Lunch & Scenic Rokkosan Ranch**

After breakfast, you will head to a drive to Kobe. Upon arrival, begin your visit at Kobe Port, where you can enjoy the refreshing sea breeze and admire the city's famous waterfront, including the iconic Kobe Port Tower. Continue to Nankinmachi, Kobe's vibrant Chinatown, where you will stop for lunch and sample a variety of local specialties with the help of your guide.

In the afternoon, travel up to Rokkosan Ranch, a relaxing countryside retreat surrounded by beautiful natural scenery. Here, you can interact with friendly farm animals, stroll through the peaceful grounds, and take in panoramic views from the observatory. After your visit, return to Osaka by private car for the evening.

Overnight in Osaka

**23<sup>rd</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 12 – Historic Castle & Vibrant Street Food Culture**

After breakfast, begin your day exploring Osaka, Japan's third-largest city and a lively hub known for its rich history, warm personality, and exceptional cuisine. Start at the expansive Osaka Castle Park, home to one of Japan's most iconic landmarks. Originally built in 1583 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the castle impresses with its immense moats, intricate gates, and towering stone walls. Visit the Main Tower, which now serves

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as a museum showcasing artifacts from the castle's past, and enjoy panoramic views of the Osaka skyline from the 8th-floor observation deck.

In the afternoon, dive into Osaka's energetic urban life with a street-food and shopping experience. Stroll through Shinsaibashi-suji, the city's busiest shopping arcade, before heading to the neon-lit district of Dotonbori. Famous for its glowing signs, lively canals, and the iconic Glico Man billboard, this area is the heart of Osaka's entertainment scene. Enjoy lunch during the day with Osaka's beloved specialties such as takoyaki, kushikatsu, and okonomiyaki.

You may also choose to visit optional sights such as the Kamigata Ukiyoe Museum to explore traditional woodblock prints, or wander the retro streets of Shinsekai and ascend the nostalgic Tsutenkaku Tower for views over the old town.

Overnight in Osaka

**24<sup>th</sup> October - Itinerary Overview: Day 13 – Leisure Day in Osaka & Departure**

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a full free day in Osaka to explore the city at your own pace. Whether you prefer last-minute shopping, relaxing in a café, or revisiting your favourite sights, the day is yours to unwind and make the most of your final hours in Japan.

A late check-out is arranged for your comfort. In the evening, gather with the group for a farewell dinner, celebrating the wonderful journey shared together.

After dinner, transfer to the airport for your scheduled flight departing at 23:45.

Your arrival in Malta is scheduled for 25th October at 13:00hrs.

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### Tour Pricing and Inclusions

Adult in a single room	€6040
Adult in a twin/double room	€4750

#### Price includes:

- Emirates Flights –
  - Malta-Dubai – Narita
  - Osaka -Dubai-Malta
- Luggage 23kgs checked in luggage, 8kgs cabin bag and small bag
- Accommodation in 3\* and 4\* hotel
- Daily breakfast
- Lunches and dinner as indicated in the itinerary
- All transfers mentioned in the itinerary
- All excursions mentioned in the itinerary
- Admissions tickets
- Local English-speaking guide
- 2 bottles of water each day
- Service of a Maltese speaking Kercem A' Tours tour leader
- Insolvency Fund Certificate

#### Price does not include:

- Tips
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Insurance

**NB. The itinerary may be subject to slight adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances that may occur.**

**The booking is confirmed upon payment of €1500 deposit.**

Payments can be made with a cheque made payable to Kercem A' Tours, via bank transfer or by cash. Card payments are also accepted over the phone.

**For bank transfers kindly issue the payments to the following Bank Account details:**

Kercem Ajax FC. A/C TOURS

Account Number: 40023111554

IBAN: MT09VALL2201300000040023111554

Account Currency: EUR

**With bank transfers please make reference to the tour and provide your full name. Eg. Japan in October - MR AND MRS VELLA**

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