

**Sample Itinerary:
The Artistry of Japan**
May 13-24, 2010

Highlights

Join Esprit Travel on an intimate 10 night journey into to the cultural heart of Japan, exploring its art, crafts, traditions, gardens and history—from the ultramodern museums and galleries of Tokyo to the studios and gardens of timeless Kyoto.

- Learn about the wealth of Japanese art and fine crafts, from traditional to contemporary;
- Visit galleries and museums in Tokyo and Kyoto, including the Miho Museum;
- Stroll through charming neighborhoods;
- Enjoy a thought-provoking introduction to Buddhism and Shinto, through private meetings with priests in their temples or shrines;
- Enter the studios of fascinating artists and craftsmen;
- Sample a variety of seasonal cuisine.



May 13: Thursday Depart U.S. for Japan on individually arranged flights.

May 14: Friday Tokyo

Arrive Tokyo Narita International Airport and transfer to our conveniently located hotel in Tokyo by Airport Limousine Bus.

Accommodations: Royal Park Shiodome Tower Hotel

May 15: Saturday Tokyo

We begin the day at Tsukiji, one of the world's largest and busiest seafood markets. We'll visit both the inner fish market and the vegetable and kitchen supply markets that are just outside. At Meiji Shrine, learn about Shinto and experience a blessing ceremony of ancient, sacred music and dance. On a walking tour on Omotesando-dori, view contemporary architecture and trendy street life. Dinner at an architecturally interesting, Japanese fusion style restaurant will complete the day.

Accommodations: Royal Park Shiodome Tower Hotel (B,D)

May 16: Sunday Tokyo

Overview of Japanese art at the Tokyo National Museum of Art, and time to explore on your own. Tour the gourmet food floor at Takashimaya Department Store. Visit Hanabako, a gallery specializing in bamboo baskets for an introduction by the collector to this quintessentially Japanese art form.

Accommodations: Royal Park Shiodome Tower Hotel (B)

May 17: Monday Tokyo

Begin the day at Nuno Gallery, known for innovative textiles and clothing, for a presentation by renowned designer Reiko Sudo. At nearby Roppongi Hills, explore street level art and have lunch at the French Kitchen. After lunch, visit the Tolman Gallery, Tokyo's foremost contemporary print collection, and enjoy some free time.

Accommodations: Royal Park Shiodome Tower Hotel (B, L)

心の旅

The Artistry of Japan

May 18: Tuesday Tokyo to Toba

We ship our large suitcases ahead to Kyoto, and depart by train with easily managed overnight bags. A short ride on the high speed Shinkansen (Bullet Train) takes us to Mishima, to visit the studio of ceramics collector Rob Yellin. Continue by train down the Ise peninsula to Toba, where our accommodations are at a traditional ryokan with natural hot spring baths. Tonight's dinner will be a multi-course kaiseki banquet of exquisitely presented seasonal cuisine.

Yuki no Sato Ryokan (B, D)

May 19: Wednesday Toba to Kyoto

After a customary Japanese breakfast of fish, rice, miso soup and pickles, visit Ise Shrine, one of Japan's most sacred places. After time to explore on your own, travel by train to Kyoto, arriving in the late afternoon. Dinner near the hotel will be followed by an optional neighborhood walk.

Accommodations: Nikko Princess Kyoto (B,D)

May 20: Thursday Kyoto

Visit the home of a renowned performance calligraphy artist for a demonstration of his dynamic large format technique. Performance of shakuhachi flute music followed by lunch at a 300 year old riverside inn. At Rengei-ji, an intimate Buddhist temple in Kyoto's northern hills, the temple's abbot talks to us about his garden.

Demonstration of makeup and costumes and a private performance of Noh theatre at an historic private theatre.

Accommodations: Nikko Princess Kyoto (B,L)

May 21: Friday Kyoto

Early risers have the opportunity to observe a Buddhist service and fire ceremony performed by 40 chanting monks. Visit Sarah Brayer, a longtime resident of Kyoto who works with traditional Japanese papermaking techniques. Walk to Koto in, a temple



dedicated to the practice of tea for the past 400 years, with a soothing atmosphere of bamboo, maple trees, and moss. Zen-style vegetarian lunch at Izusen, within Daitoku-ji Zen Monastery, headquarters of the Rinzai sect of Buddhism. Experience the Way of Tea with a tea master and Zen priest, and see the garden at Zuihoin, with its vigorously raked gravel and fine arrangement of stones and moss.

Accommodations: Nikko Princess Kyoto (B,L)

May 22: Saturday Kyoto

Excursion to Yasu, to visit the workshop of a family of indigo dyers. Continue through the countryside to see the exquisite Asian art collection at I.M. Pei's Miho Museum. Lunch is a traditional bento box. In nearby Shigaraki pottery village, visit the studio and kiln of a contemporary ceramic artist.

Accommodations: Nikko Princess Kyoto (B,L)

May 23: Sunday Kyoto

Travel by local train to Kyoto's far western edge to explore the 14th-century temple and garden complex of Tenryuji Zen Monastery. Walk through a bamboo forest to Okochisanso, the former villa and stroll garden of a silent movie actor. At Saihoji Temple, stroll through the mystical five-acre moss garden. Farewell dinner.

Accommodations: Nikko Princess Kyoto (B,D)

心の旅

May 24: Monday Depart Japan

Visit Sanjusangendo Buddhist
statuary, then depart by van for
Osaka Kansai International
Airport for homeward flights.
(B)



\$5250 Tour Price Includes:

10 nights hotel accommodations (based on twin occupancy).
Baggage shipping for one suitcase per person.
Airport transfers as described.
A full program of informative commentary by an Esprit tour leader fluent in Japanese.
Daily touring, including admissions and transportation.
Daily breakfast and additional meals as indicated.

Tour price is based on a minimum group size of 14.

Single Supplement approximately \$900
Single rooms are limited.

Tour price may be adjusted for currency fluctuation.

For Terms and Conditions and Registration Information, contact Esprit Travel and Tours: 800-377-7481 or info@esprittravel.com.

This itinerary is provided to give you a flavor of the places and people we visit, where we stay, how we travel and what we experience. Because each Esprit tour is individually crafted, your tour may not include the exact same schedule, but will be very similar to what you see here.

Actual visits and events will be finalized approximately 30 days prior to departure to allow for the inclusion of special exhibitions, visits and events, and are dependent on the schedules of our Japanese colleagues. A final itinerary will be sent to you about two weeks prior to tour departure.

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