

Ceramics & Crafts October 2-11, 2009

Highlights

This tour is a dream-come-true for ceramics enthusiasts who want a real education in Japanese ceramics while enjoying a deeply personal experience of Japan's culture, arts, history, cuisine and aesthetic influences. Traveling Japan's famed ceramic centers, kiln towns and artist's studios is a not-to-be-missed experience.

Join Steve Beimel, Esprit's founder and Japanese ceramics expert, and...

- Visit ceramic artists in their homes and studios;
- Learn not only about Japanese ceramics, but also the history, culture and arts that have shaped the exquisite Japanese aesthetic;
- Experience the three quintessential kiln towns of historic Bizen, picturesque Hagi and seaside Karatsu;
- Enjoy regional, seasonal cuisine.



October 2 Friday
Depart USA by individually arranged flights.

October 3 Saturday Arrive Osaka Kansai Airport.

Transfer and stay in a conveniently located hotel in downtown Osaka.

Meals: none

October 4 Sunday Osaka to Kurashiki

We begin our ceramics journey with a visit to Osaka's Museum of Oriental Ceramics, to see their permanent collection of Chinese, Korean and Japanese masterworks and the current show. After arrival in historic Kurashiki, proceed to the Ohara Museum to see their world-class collection of Four Mingei Masters: Shoji Hamada, Kawai Kanjiro, Bernard Leach and Tomimoto Kenkichi. Slide lecture presenting a broad stroke of Japanese ceramic styles, with an emphasis on Bizen, Hagi and Karatsu, the three kiln towns that we will be visiting over the next week. Group dinner.

Accommodations: Hotel 330 Grande

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

October 5 Monday Kurashiki-Bizen

An early departure takes us to the town of Imbe, to visit several distinctly different Bizen ceramic artists in their studios. There will also be free time for individual exploration of local galleries, both in Bizen and in Kurashiki upon our return.

Accommodations: Hotel 330 Grande

Meals: Breakfast

October 6 Tuesday Hagi

Travel to Hagi by train and van. Over the next two days, we will visit the homes and studios of four ceramic artists.

Accommodations: Hagi Royal Intelligent Hotel

Meals: Breakfast

October 7 Wednesday

Artist visits in the morning. In the afternoon, there will be time for individual exploration of this lovely town.

Accommodations: Hagi Royal Intelligent Hotel

Meals: Breakfast

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October 8 Thursday Karatsu

Travel to Karatsu by van and train. Over the next 2 days, we'll view both classic and contemporary Karatsu ceramic works. Dinner tonight will be a multi-course kaiseki banquet at the ryokan. Accommodations: Yoyokaku Ryokan
Meals: Breakfast and dinner.

October 9 Friday Karatsu

Visits to artists and galleries. Accommodations: Yoyokaku Ryokan
Meals: Breakfast

October 10 Saturday Kyoto

Travel by train to Kyoto. Free afternoon, farewell dinner
Accommodations: Hearton Hotel.
Meals: Breakfast and dinner

October 11 Sunday Depart Japan

Transfer to Kansai Airport by reserved van shuttle, and depart by individually arranged flights.
Meals: Breakfast



You may wish to extend your tour in Japan. We will provide reservations at the group hotel in Kyoto and sightseeing itineraries of Kyoto and Tokyo at no extra charge. For those wishing additional services from us, including hotel reservations, local guides, custom itineraries and transportation arrangements, please discuss possibilities and fees with our custom travel department.



Steve Beimel

A Japanophile for over thirty years, Steve Beimel founded Esprit Travel & Tours in the early 1990's, as a U.S.-based tour company specializing in culturally focused tours to Japan. Over the years, he has worked with a wide range of masters of traditional culture including art, crafts, architecture, gardens, music, theater, cuisine and religion. "The most fulfilling part of my Japan-related life is working with so many amazing and talented men and women. It has

been a great privilege for me to introduce guests from abroad to these people, in a true spirit of cultural exchange." For ten years Steve published The Kyoto Diary, a quarterly journal celebrating the arts of Japan and featuring interviews with many of the Japan's renowned craftsmen and artists and now publishes a blog, www.japanlivingarts.com. He lives with his wife Ritsuko in the northern foothills of Kyoto where his passion is collecting and studying fine ceramics and related arts.

Estimated Price: \$4,750 based on a group of 10.

Tour Price Includes:

8 nights accommodations* in based on twin occupancy, as described or similar.
Daily breakfast and additional meals as indicated.
Airport transfers and train tickets in ordinary class.
Daily touring, including admissions and local transport.

A single supplement will apply.

(Price may be adjusted for currency fluctuation at final payment.)

***Please enquire if you are interested in staying in a ryokan in Kurashiki and Hagi. There is a surcharge for ryokan stays and they are subject to availability.**

The itinerary will be finalized approximately 30 days prior to departure and is subject to change at any time.

For registration information and Terms and Conditions, call 800-377-7481, or email info@esprittravel.com

