



Ultimate Indulgences Expeditions: the Kyoto Pref. Edition

From delicious, Michelin-starred meals to stunning scenery and luxury Japanese inns, this 6-day, 7-night itinerary takes guests on a daily gastronomic and wellness adventure to the north of Japan. Every day features unforgettable stops at some of Sapporo's finest dining destinations, hot spring towns and serene ryokans

Day 1 Yunohana

Arrive at Kansai International Airport and transfer to Yunohana Hot Spring Resort Suisen via a chauffeured ride through the small city of Uji – alternately known as the OchayanoKyoto, or “Kyoto of Tea”. This resplendent tea centre, with its spectacular scenery, has a tea making culture going back 800 years, and is the birthplace of cherished varieties such as matcha, sencha and gyokuro. Here, you will dine at Tatsumiya, an esoteric dining experience where the taste of dozens of local teas is incorporated into the highly stylized dishes on offer. The chauffeur then transfers you to Yunohana Hot Spring Suisen, a luxurious onsen spa that's nestled discreetly in the mountains above Kyoto, and where the many guest temptations on offer include artistically displayed kaiseki-style cuisine.

Day 2 Yunohana

This day is set aside for a thorough exploration of the mountainous area that surrounds Yunohana, a diverse landscape that offers an equally eclectic range of sightseeing experiences and activities for visitors. In the morning, guests may take a scenic river rafting ride along Hozugawa Gorge, a journey lasting approximately two hours, which starts at the town of Kameoka near the resort and ends at the magnificent, temple- and shrine-filled town of Arashiyama which is known worldwide for its bamboo groves. Alternatively, depending on personal preference and the time of year, they may take a romantic ride on the Sagano train which passes through the mountain tracks. If travelling to Arashiyama, guests may meet a guide, who will escort them to the newly opened Fukuda Museum, after which they may partake in a private zen meditation or a gardening workshop, and from there may transfer to spend the evening in central Kyoto. From the city, guests will be chauffeured back to the Yunohana Hot Spring Resort Suisen for another night in this serenely situated onsen establishment.

Day 3 Miyama

It's a 45-minute chauffeured transfer after checkout at Yunohana to our next destination, which lies to the north in the countryside for which this region of Honshu is rightly famous. Despite its notable natural beauty, Miyama remains blissfully free of tourists – a case in point being the traditionally styled guesthouse, Miyama Futon & Breakfast, a series of four farmhouse accommodations in the thatched-cottage (kayabuki) style, where guests will check in for the next two days. Here, ensconced within the rustic culture known as satoyama, a private guide will escort visitors through the wonders of the countryside including the thatched village of Miyama itself, with its Miyama Folk Museum, and reveal how the centuries have done little to change the traditional life of the local people, such as those residing in Shirakawa, whose homes with distinctive full-length roofs set within a valley have earned the village a Unesco World Heritage designation. In the evening, guests may return for dinner at Miyama Futon & Breakfast.

Day 4 Miyama

On the fourth day of this itinerary guests may further luxuriate in the verdant surrounds of Miyama in the company of a private guide, this time venturing further up towards the more mountainous reaches of this rural area. The day begins with a mountain hike to lofty Hora village, which is accessed via a succession of pristine streams where guests may stop to enjoy the cooling and cleansing effects. Eventually they will reach the star attraction of the area, Otodani Falls, which at a height of 65 metres dominates the local landscape, and where views of the waterfall are complemented by beautiful mododendrons when they're in season in the early springtime. Guests will also find their path towards the falls has recently been eased by the actions of local residents, who streamlined the walkway to the approach. Later in the day, guests may repair to Restaurant Kajikaso, part of the Miyama Nature & Culture Village, where they will experience the full gamut of Miyama seasonal ingredients – as well as the local-specialty cuisine known as jibie (meat obtained through hunting), served in the decorative kaiseki style – before returning to the rustic comforts of Miyama F&B.

Day 5 Amanohashidate

On checking out from Miyama, there follows a 90-minute northbound drive towards the shoreside area colloquially known as Kyoto-by-the-Sea, and the town of Ine which is known for its fishing industry and archetypal wooden fishing houses. After checking into the private and exclusive floating hotel of Kura, which stands directly on the waterfront, guests may spend the day on a guided tour of the town, which plays host to more than 230 boathouses, and enjoy a privately escorted journey through the Mukai Sake Brewery, a tiny artisanal distillery which was founded more than 260 years ago and holds the distinction of being the area's oldest local brewer. Later in the day, guests may return to the elemental charms of Kura, and enjoy the tranquility of this “boat-el” as the surrounding scenery reflects the passing of the hours. After relaxing amid the lapping waves, invigorating seashore aromas and a fabulous sundown, the stage is set for an expertly prepared private dinner and, reflecting our surroundings, a choice of either Ine yellowtail or fresh crab.

Day 6 Amanohashidate

The final full day of your itinerary begins in the early morning at a nearby boathouse with a spot of private angling in the company of a local fisherman, who will be on hand to assist guests catch their preferred seafood which can later be cooked for lunch. Subsequently guests will be chauffeured from the town of Ine for a private tour around the renowned sandbar of Amanohashidate, a picturesque sea crossing where pine trees cover the entirety of a sandbar, which provides a magnetic photo opportunity from the vantage point of the cable car above. Later on, having checked out of Kura, guests will be free to move into Hoshino Oto, part of the Marinetopia Resort, where they may wallow in the sensuous onsen offerings – including a golden pool – amid dreamlike natural scenery before availing of the finest food produce which has been sourced from up to 12 fishermen from nearby towns, as well as matsuba (snow crabs) during the winter period.

Day 7

For your departure, a private chauffeur will take you from Hoshino Oto to Kansai International Airport, Osaka Prefecture.

About Japan Luxury Travel Alliance

Formed in 2016, the Japan Luxury Travel Alliance (JLTA) is a group of several Japanese localities, each offering unique and inspired experiences in luxury travel. The members of the alliance are: Kyoto, one of Japan's leading historical and cultural destinations; the city of Sapporo, renowned for its fine, powder-like snow; Ishikawa Prefecture, where the fascinating samurai culture endures to this day; and Wakayama Prefecture, home of Mt Koya and the spiritual trail known as the Kumado Kodo. The group's objectives are to collaborate on delivering consistently high quality travel experiences and to promote Japan as an ideal destination for luxury travelers from around the world. The Ultimate Indulgences Expeditions Series is a project with curated content by luxury travel specialists members of Japan Luxury Travel Alliance project.