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NORTHERN JAPAN SPRING TOUR AT CHERRY BLOSSOM TIME

16 Day Conducted Tour

for **\$6,995** per person twin share
This price includes airport taxes & levies

This tour visits many Cherry Blossom festivals and also Azalea, Moss Phlox and Wisteria Festivals. The price includes:

- Air fares with Qantas and Japan Airlines from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane into Tokyo and out of Sapporo.
- A 15 day tour of central and northern Japan by coach and bullet train. As well as the flower festivals the tour visits several Japanese gardens, many museums, art galleries and historical villages.
- Good accommodation, mainly three to four star.
- Most meals, as stated in the itinerary.
- Prepaid gratuities to the main tour guide and drivers.
- All transfers and transport and entrance fees to many attractions.
- Services of a local tour guide and if there are 15 or more participants, an Australian tour escort.



This tour visits Japan in mid spring, when the flowers mentioned should be in bloom, but this cannot be guaranteed as it depends on the climatic conditions at the time. This is an opportunity to see this beautiful and fascinating country when it should be at its best.

If you don't have anyone to share with but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try to assign you with another person, but this is not guaranteed. For a single room there is an extra cost of \$1,195.

The tour departs Australia on the 18th April and returns 3rd May 2019

We try harder to find you the best travel deal

Itinerary for Northern Japan Spring Tour

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

18.04.19 Australia - Tokyo, Japan

Depart Sydney at 6.00am on QF 401, arriving in Melbourne at 7.35am.

Sydney and Melbourne passengers depart Melbourne at 9.10am on QF 79, arriving in Tokyo (Narita Airport) at 6.35pm.

Depart Brisbane at 9.35am on QF 61, arriving in Tokyo (Narita Airport) at 5.55pm.

We are met and transferred to our hotel for a two night stay.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Ginza or similar

19.04.19 Tokyo

(B/D)

This morning we visit the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum in Saitama City, which is the world's first publicly run Bonsai Museum, opened in 2010. The museum displays masterpieces and other outstanding works, with the collection of the former Takagi Bonsai Museum of Art forming the nucleus.

In the afternoon we will visit the Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden in inner Tokyo, with its spacious lawns, walking paths and tranquil scenery. The largest section is devoted to a traditional Japanese landscape garden, featuring large ponds dotted with islands and bridges with well manicured shrubs and trees surrounding the water.

The other main gardens include a symmetrically arranged formal French garden and an English landscape garden surrounded by cherry trees. There is also a beautiful greenhouse with many tropical and sub-tropical flowers.

This evening we enjoy an included dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Ginza or similar

20.04.19 Tokyo – Mt Fuji / Hakone area

(B/D)

Our first visit today will be to Nezu Shrine with the Bunkyo Azalea Festival. The Nezu Shrine is believed to have been established more than 1900 years ago, and is famous for its 300 year old beautiful azalea garden. The garden features about 3000 azalea plants of 100 different species, including some rare varieties.

Next we visit the Tokyo National Museum which was established in 1872 and is the largest art museum in Japan. The museum contains a comprehensive collection of art works and archaeological objects of Asia, focusing on Japan.

Following this we visit the Tokyo Tower, the second-tallest structure in Japan. At 333 metres high, this Eiffel Tower-inspired lattice tower has two observation decks and we will visit the lower observation deck.

Afterwards we transfer by road to the Mt. Fuji / Hakone area.

This evening we have an included dinner.

Please note that your accommodation for this evening will likely be in a Japanese Tatami room. In this style of hotel, passengers will sleep on a mattress on the floor instead of a western style bed.

Accommodation: Hotel Kasugai or similar

21.04.19 Fuji Shibazakura Festival

(B/D)

This morning we visit the Fuji Shibazakura Festival. The festival displays Shibazakura, whose scientific name is *Phlox subulata*. It is a perennial of the family Polemoniaceae, and a species of phlox. From April to May, it usually blooms in

small blossoms of around 1.5cm diameter, in red, pink, white, or purple. Native to North America, it is also known as “Moss Phlox” Noted for the resemblance of its flowers to cherry blossoms, it is a creeper plant, covering the ground like a lawn, and thus it is called ‘lawn cherry.’ With snow-capped Mt. Fuji in the background there are great picture-taking opportunities.

We then visit the Ichiku Kubota Art Museum, devoted to the masterful silk dyeing works of Ichiku Kubota. On display are several of his kimono creations depicting themes of nature and also parts of his unfinished masterpiece comprised of eighty kimonos, which together form a picture of Mt. Fuji.

Our last stop today will be the a visit to the Hakone Open-Air Museum, featuring over a thousand sculptures and other works of art, including some by Picasso and Henry Moore. This evening we have an included dinner.

Accommodation: Hakone Sengokuhara Prince Hotel or similar

22.04.19 Mt Fuji/Hakone area – Mito

(B/D)

Today we have about a four hour drive north to the Hitachi Seaside Park. This huge 500 acre park is home to a variety of colourful flowers and grasses. While we are there the tulips should be in flower.

Afterwards we visit Kairaku-en Garden, considered to be one of the Three Great Gardens of Japan. This garden was built in 1841 by the local Lord Tokugawa Nariaki. This garden is unique in that it served not only for the enjoyment of the ruling Lord, but was also open to the public. Kairaku-en means ‘park to be enjoyed together’. This evening enjoy an included dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel Mets Mito or similar

23.04.19 Mito - Aizu Wakamatsu

(B/D)

This morning we have an early start to visit the Ashikaga Flower Park to attend their Great Wisteria Festival. In 2014, this festival was voted by CNN as one of the “Top 10 World Dream Destinations.” The park covers 23 acres and showcases the beauty of wisteria and many other flowers. There are more than 350 wisterias, and there are wisteria tunnels up to 80 metres long that visitors can walk through. The park’s main feature is a huge, sprawling wisteria that is over 140 years old. The park also has more than 5000 azalea bushes that should be blooming. The rich and vibrant colours in the full sunshine create a dazzling view.

Next we have a 2½ hour drive to visit Ouchi-Juku Traditional Village. It is famous for the numerous traditional thatched buildings from the Edo period that line the main street. We have an overnight stay in Aizu Wakamatsu. This evening we enjoy an included dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel New Palace or similar

24.04.19 Aizu Wakamatsu – Matsushima - Sendai

(B/L/D)

Today we visit the rustic but fascinating Sazaedo Temple, a 17 metre high 3-storey structure built in 1795. It has a fascinating spiral staircase both up and down. It is made entirely out of wood employing traditional Japanese woodworking/joinery techniques. The level above the temple also contains the memorials of 19 young Byakkota Samurai warriors who took their own life at this site during the civil war of 1868. Following this we have a three hour drive to Matsushima and enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch we have an included sightseeing cruise through the fascinating offshore small islands. Matsushima is one of the three most beautiful sites in Japan, along with Miyajima in Hiroshima and

Amanohashidate in Kyoto. Next we visit the Naohide Kokeshi shop, which make traditional wooden dolls.

Afterwards we travel through to Sendai, the main city in northern Japan, for a two night stay. Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Sendai or similar

25.04.19 Sendai

(B) Today is at leisure in Sendai.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Sendai or similar

26.04.19 Sendai - Hiraizumi – Kitakami - Koyokan

(B/L/D)

Today we travel to and visit the Hiraizumi World Heritage Site. Here there is a well-preserved group of various temples and gardens dating back to about 1050. We will visit Konjikido Golden Hall, built in 1124, and covered in gold leaf. This is followed by an included lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon we visit the Esashi Fujiwara Heritage Park, a themed park to experience the Japanese Heian era (794-1185). The 50 acre park has a palace, a guest house, a temple and another 120 buildings that represent historical structures from that period. The park has been the setting for many Japanese films and TV dramas. Afterwards we have a walk along the riverside to view the impressive cherry blossom trees at Tenshochi, which should be in bloom. We overnight in the Koyokan area. Dinner this evening is included.

Accommodation: Hanamaki Onsen Hotel or similar

27.04.19 Koyokan – Kakunodate – Mount Iwate area

(B/L/D)

This morning we depart for Kakunodate, often referred to as “Little Kyoto”. Our visit should coincide with the Kakunodate Cherry Blossom Festival, which is typically held in late April to early May. We will see the Kakunodate samurai district, which has many samurai residences dating back to 1620. The street is lined with massive weeping cherry trees, some of which are up to 200 years old. A short walk from the samurai district will bring us to the banks of the Hinokinai River. The cherry trees that line a mile-long portion of the river were planted in 1934 to celebrate the birth of Emperor Akihito, and are now formerly designated as a Place of Scenic Beauty. We also visit today the Hideyoshi Sake brewery.

We overnight in the Mount Iwate area. Lunch and dinner are included today.

Accommodation: Shizukuishi Prince Hotel or similar

28.04.19 Mount Iwate area – Hirosaki - Aomori

(B/D)

Today we drive further north to the Aomori Prefecture. En route we visit the Hirosaki Sakura-Matsuri Cherry Blossom Festival, typically held each year from late April to early May. The scenery here is fantastic. Blue sky, majestic mountains, 2600 cherry blossom trees and the wonderful Hirosaki Castle.

Upon arrival in Aomori, we have an included visit to the Nebuta Museum.

We have an overnight stay at Aomori City. Dinner this evening is included.

Note: Tonight we need to prepare an overnight bag for one night as our main luggage will be freighted overnight to Hakodate on Hokkaido Island.

Accommodation: Hotel JAL City Aomori or similar

29.04.19 Aomori - Hakodate

(B/D)

This morning we experience the fantastic Japanese bullet train from Aomori to

Hakodate. Our train journey will travel through a tunnel located beneath the Sea of Japan.

In Hakodate we visit the local fish market, followed by Goryokaku Fort & Tower. Fort Goryokaku is a massive star-shaped western style citadel constructed in the early Edo period to protect Hakodate against invasion by the western powers. In the centre of the fort stands the former magistrates office from where the officers of the Shogunate administered the whole island of Hokkaido. The fort was turned into a public park in 1910 and over 1000 cherry trees were planted along its moats.

Late this afternoon we will ascend Mt. Hakodate by coach for a panoramic view of the city. We descend the mountain by rope line (cable car).

We have a two night stay in Hakodate. Dinner this evening is included.

Accommodation: Hakodate Onuma Prince Hotel or similar

30.04.19 Hakodate – Matsumae – Esahi - Hakodate

(B/L/D)

This morning we have a two hour drive to Matsumae for the Matsumae Castle Cherry Blossom Festival. The castle is the only Japanese style castle on the island of Hokkaido. Over 10,000 cherry trees representing more than 250 different varieties can be seen around the grounds.

At the edge of the park is the Matsumaehan Yashiki, a small historical theme park that recreates Matsumae Town of the early Edo period. Some of the buildings display life-sized mannequins in their traditional clothing from that period.

Lunch is at a local restaurant in Matsumae. After lunch we drive to Esahi and visit Esahi Inishie Road, where lovingly restored historical homes and shops line both sides of the street. There are local businesses still in operation which have retained their old world charms, including some cute coffee shops and some handicraft places. Dinner this evening is at a local restaurant.

Accommodation: Hakodate Onuma Prince Hotel or similar

01.05.19 Hakodate – Yoichi – Otaru - Sapporo

(B/L/D)

Today we check out of the hotel and commence a five hour drive through to Sapporo. En route we visit Nikka Whisky Yoichi Distillery, which was opened in 1934. Following this we enjoy an included lunch in Yoichi and then drive to Otaru to visit the Otaru Canal, the Kitaichi Glass Museum and the Music Box Museum.

We have an overnight stay in Sapporo. Dinner this evening is included.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey or similar

02.05.19 Sapporo – Tokyo - Sydney

(B/L)

After breakfast we check out of the hotel and have a short stop at the historic clock tower. Following this we visit an indigo dyeing factory to learn about this traditional culture and have a hands-on experience making a handkerchief.

We have an included farewell lunch together. Afterwards we are transferred to Chitose Airport for our flights home.

Depart Sapporo (Chitose Airport) at 5.00pm on Japan Airlines flight JL 518, arriving in Tokyo Haneda Airport at 6.40pm.

Then depart Tokyo at 10.00pm on Qantas flight QF 26, arriving in Sydney at 8.30am the next morning (03.05.19).

03.05.19 Sydney – Melbourne & Brisbane

Melbourne passengers depart Sydney at 10.00am on QF 423, arriving in Melbourne

at 11.35am.

Brisbane passengers depart Sydney at 11.00am on QF 520, arriving in Brisbane at 12.30pm.



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Tour Difficulty Level 3

This tour rating typically involves a good level of physical activity, such as ascending stairs, getting into a bathtub shower, being responsible for your own luggage at airports and hotels, boarding trains quickly with your luggage, walking distances of up to 500 metres at a time over possible uneven ground and/or cobblestone streets. Walking tours of considerable distances should be expected on tours with this rating as well as some early departures. The itinerary for this tour involves some long tour days with evening hotel arrivals.

Conditions for Macleay Valley Travel's Northern Japan Spring Tour

Deposits and Payments: A non-refundable deposit of \$400 per person is payable within 7 days of booking. This deposit is not refundable should you later cancel. The balance is payable 8 weeks prior to departure. Macleay Valley Travel often has to adhere to strict payment deadlines and your booking on the tour may be cancelled if final payment is not received by the due date, with no refund applicable.

Refunds and Cancellations: Cancellations after final payment will result in a refund limited to whatever we can recoup from the airline. Macleay Valley Travel often has to adhere to strict payment deadlines and your booking on the tour may be cancelled if final payment is not received by the due date, with no refund applicable.

Airline Tickets - Please note that any changes made to airline tickets once they have been issued will likely incur high cancellation and/or reissue fees. These fees are typically set by the airline and are outside of our control.

Insurance: Adequate travel insurance is essential. We can arrange this for you if desired. Macleay Valley Travel offers Suresave Travel Insurance. Please note that we can only process your travel insurance when we have received full payment for the insurance and the signed Suresave Travel Insurance application form, located on the last page of the Suresave Travel Insurance information booklet. Until this time the travel insurance cannot be processed and will not be valid. Macleay Valley Travel will bear no responsibility for any consequences that may occur as a result of an incomplete insurance application.

Passports: All travellers require a current passport with at least 6 months left on it at the end of the tour. Non-Australian passport holders require a re-entry visa for Australia. No visas are required for Australian passport holders.

Basic Tour Price and Taxes: Air taxes and fuel levies are included in the basic tour price if the tour is paid in full on or before the due date on the final invoice. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to charge for any increase in air taxes and fuel levies if the tour is not paid in full by the due date.

Not Included in the Cost: All items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, drinks, excess baggage, tips, meals, (except those specified in the itinerary), etc. Also travel insurance. Similarly, credit card payments (Visa/MasterCard) can only be accepted if 1% is added to the price to help defray the heavy merchant fees charged to us by the credit card companies. There is a 2% surcharge for American Express.

Climatic Conditions: The tour dates have been selected to time with the proposed blooming period and expected opening dates of the flower festivals etc, however the specific blooming dates are subject to weather conditions and seasonal variations. As such we cannot guarantee that you will see the blossoms in bloom, although it is very likely.

Booking through other Agents: As we keep the cost of our tours as low as possible, there is insufficient margin for us to be able to pay commission to other travel agents, so some bookings can only be accepted if the client pays the other agent's commission.

Accreditation - Macleay Valley Travel is a fully accredited travel agency under the AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents) ATAS - AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme. As such, you are assured of a consumer focused and quality assured business, ensuring professional conduct and ethical business practices. We are happy for any prospective traveller with us to check us out with your local Consumer Affairs (Fair Trading) department.

Twin Share Bookings - If you do not have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another traveller but this is not guaranteed. We assign passengers by their gender, on a first come, first served basis and do not assign twin share passengers according to their age, profession, interests etc. There are risks with sharing a room with a person you do not know, and Macleay Valley Travel accepts no responsibility if you are incompatible with your assigned room mate. Additionally, if you are assigned a travelling companion to share with and they cancel off the tour prior to making the final payment, then you will either be required to pay the single room supplement or we will try our best to assign you with another twin share passenger, if one is available.

Breakaway Fee - All fully inclusive prices are based on group travel and any deviation from the set itinerary will incur a breakaway fee. The breakaway fee for most deviations including a post-tour extension on this tour is \$115 per person. Please inquire with our office for prices on any pre-tour extensions.

Health and Fitness - Macleay Valley Travel recommends that the passenger is reasonably healthy and/or fit to participate in this tour. Persons with a disability requiring special assistance must be accompanied by a companion. Macleay Valley Travel and their representatives cannot provide this service. The Health & Fitness Questionnaire located on the last page of this itinerary needs to be completed in full by each passenger and accompany your booking form. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to accept/decline or terminate a passenger's participation in the tour under certain circumstances. Macleay Valley Travel is not permitted to provide medical advice as to vaccinations/injections which you may require for this tour and advise you to consult your local medical practitioner for specific medical advice. There are no compulsory injections required for this tour.

Limitation of Liability - As Macleay Valley Travel acts only as agent for the Airlines, Hotels, Coach Companies etc., providing accommodation, transportation and other services, Macleay Valley Travel shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property including baggage arising out of or connection with any transportation, accommodation or other services, or resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of Government or other authorities, de jure or de facto wars, whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations caused by changes in schedules or itinerary, or over bookings or defaults or for any causes beyond Macleay Valley Travel's control or any loss or damage resulting from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents and neither Macleay Valley Travel, and its servants or employees shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of the foregoing causes. Additionally you must meet the entry requirements for each country you visit. Macleay Valley Travel will not be liable if you are denied entry to a country for any reason, including a past criminal history. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to decline bookings made for any group tour. Any tour booking confirmation is conditional, contingent on our view of the ability of a person to be able to participate in a tour without the likelihood of conflict between members of a tour whether perceived or actual.

Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to modify the itinerary or the accommodation if circumstances make this necessary, provided that the amended itinerary is of equal value or greater value than that of the original program.

MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL - BOOKING FORM

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS AND ALSO

A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE SENT WITH BOOKING FORM

Name of Tour : _____ Departure Date: _____

Passenger 1 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Passenger 2 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____ **PostCode** _____ **Email** _____

Telephone / Fax Number: _____ **Mobile** _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Nationality: _____ Preferred Name: _____

Passport Nationality _____ Preferred Name: _____

(Passport must have 6 months validity from the time of tour completion)

Single room / Twin beds / Double bed: (Room type is subject to availability)

Circle which airport you wish to depart from: SYDNEY / MELBOURNE / BRISBANE

Special Dietary Requests – Passenger 1: _____ Passenger 2: _____

Optional Extensions: _____

Would you like to receive details of our travel insurance?: YES / NO (Please Circle)

Any existing medical conditions – Passenger 1: _____ Passenger 2: _____

In case of emergency, please notify :

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return this sheet with your non-refundable deposit of \$400 per person and the health & fitness form.

DECLARATION. I have read and understand fully the booking conditions and I accept them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of passport is required to verify spelling of name; If this is not provided and the information we have for the airline is incorrect and ticket is issued, then the airline will charge a reissue fee.

HEALTH & FITNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Macleay Valley Travel strives to make our tours enjoyable experiences for all passengers, however some countries and tour services lack the standards that you can typically expect in Australia.

To help ensure your personal safety and enjoyment on tour, please answer the following questions. The information you provide will be treated confidentially and will be used to check that the transportation, accommodation and facilities on tour are suitable for you:

1. Do you have any allergies? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details and severity: _____

2. Can you walk 500 metres to 1km in distance comfortably and unaided?

Yes / No

3. Can you negotiate uneven, undulating and sometimes challenging terrain?

Yes / No

If no, please provide details about these limitations: _____

4. Do you use a mobility aid? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details: _____

5. Are you travelling with a companion or carer who is able to provide all the assistance you need to enter buildings, disembark and embark ships, aircraft, coaches, small boats and assist you on excursions? Yes / No

If yes, please provide the name of your carer/companion and your relationship to them: _____

6. Are you taking any medical equipment to assist you? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details: _____

7. Do you suffer from any condition which may cause you to experience memory loss or become disoriented? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details: _____

8. Are you asthmatic or do you have other breathing difficulties? Yes / No

If yes, please provide details (travelling to high altitudes is not recommended): _____

9. Do you require supplementary oxygen? Yes / No

10. Are you currently taking medication? Yes / No

If yes, are you able to administer your own medication? Yes / No

11. If you have any other medical information that is not covered in the previous questions, please provide a description here: _____

The information you supply us will be passed onto relevant travel suppliers who will do their best accommodate you. However, it is very important to remember that meeting your needs cannot be guaranteed, especially when travelling to third world countries.

DISCLAIMER

I confirm that the information provided on this questionnaire is both true and correct and I understand that there is no guarantee that all these needs will or can be met. I agree that Macleay Valley Travel may offer a recommendation with regard to fitness to travel, based on the information I have provided. I also understand that this information may be passed onto those responsible for supplying the land arrangements for my travel, and that my information will not be communicated to any party which is not directly responsible or otherwise associated with my travel arrangements. I further confirm and agree that should I choose not to disclose information which subsequently requires me to return or be returned home from a tour or cruise, Macleay Valley Travel is not responsible for any costs associated with cancellation penalties, airfares, land transportation or any other related hardship. Please note that a refund for lost touring cannot be claimed. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to update the information I provided to Macleay Valley Travel immediately should my circumstances change.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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If yes, please provide the name of your carer/companion and your relationship to them: _____

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Signature: _____

Date: _____