

## BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

### 2025 WALKING TOUR OF KAMIKOCHI, NAGANO AND SURROUNDS

**Start:** Saturday, 11 October 2025 from Tokyo

**Finish:** Thursday, 23 October 2025 at Kyoto

**Duration:** 13 days

**Group size:** 8 people

**Cost estimate:** AUD \$8,650 per person

**Single supplement:** AUD \$1,500 per person

**Ref:** GHK-25

#### TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2025 Walking Tour of Kamikochi, Nagano and Surrounds takes you into the heart of the Japanese Alps ablaze with the stunning alpine autumn colours as well as popular destinations of Japan, including Tokyo, Kyoto and Takayama.

Japan is well known for its busy cities and crowded urban areas, but did you know Japan has spectacular natural scenery and pristine wilderness too? This Walking Tour of Kamikochi, Nagano & Surrounds will have you walk through these beautiful areas and small villages so you can experience them for yourself. Expert local guides lead the intimate group of up to 8 travellers on some of the best day walks in Japan on this 13-day adventure.

This Walking Tour takes you along boardwalks and forested trails through pristine Kamikochi and other outstanding national parks not typically visited by international tourists. You will stay at a working temple and a lodge in the national park, and enjoy the natural hot springs resort towns as well as big and small cities. Truly a tour for those who enjoy unspoiled countryside without being smothered by tourists.

**Activity Level – Moderate:** Participants need to be in good health and fit. They must be able to walk up to 10 km a day with some ascents and descents, sometimes on uneven terrain. We recommended good shoes that have ankle support and are at least water resistant, ideally waterproof. Walking poles are not a requirement unless you aren't confident about your walking abilities. Main luggage will be transferred to the next accommodation, however, a small day pack with personal items must be carried by the participants during the walks.

\*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Sat 11/10/2025	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Welcome to Japan! On arrival at Narita or Haneda Airport, you will be met by a Journey to the East guide and escorted to your hotel by an airport shuttle or Narita Express train.</p> <p>Today is an arrival day, and no group program is scheduled. Your hotel is located near the glitzy Ginza and the famous Tsukiji Market. Why not take a stroll and relax, ready to start the first full day of your 2025 Walking Tour of Kamikochi, Nagano and Surrounds.</p> <p>*Many of our guests arrive a day or so early to settle in before the tour starts. We can arrange your additional night's accommodation in the same room as the tour.</p>	No meals	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyobashi [Moderate Twin/Queen]
2	Sun 12/10/2025	Guided tour of Mt Takao	<p>Today, you take a suburban train to head to the western end of Tokyo and spend a day at Mt Takao (599 m/1,965 feet). The mountain is very popular with locals, the peak is readily accessible, and it holds three stars from the Michelin Guide. Millions of visitors are drawn to the area for the natural oasis and abundant wildlife. There is a variety of walking trails depending on your fitness and interests. On clear days, the view from the summit stretches as far as Mt Fuji. The mountain is also home to the historic Yakuoin Temple, which was originally built in the eighth century. Apart from the enjoyable walks, you will be able to see the life of ordinary Tokyoites, a world away from the grit and the glamour of central Tokyo.</p> <p>Going back to your hotel by the train, you will have a "welcome to Japan" dinner at a local izakaya restaurant tonight.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 6 km (3.1 miles) Elevation: 411 m (1,348 feet) ascent and descent Terrain: sealed road and well-maintained trail</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Mitsui Garden Hotel Kyobashi [Moderate Twin/Queen]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
3	Mon 13/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Nagano	<p>A Shinkansen (bullet train) whisks you away from Tokyo to Nagano in less than 2 hours.</p> <p>Nagano is in the geographical centre of Japan's main island, Honshu, and at the base of the Japan Alps. Although Nagano is well-known for its snow in winter, it is also the home of Zenkoji Temple, one of the most significant temples in Japan. It has more than 1,400 years of history and is unique in the way that it does not belong to any sect of Buddhism. Residents and pilgrims from around Japan visit here for prayers.</p> <p>Today as well as exploring this magnificent temple complex, you walk through a 1.8 km approach leading to Zenkoji, lined with fascinating stores and little restaurants, among local worshippers. Tonight you will stay at a working temple and experience the temple lodging. It consists of a simple private room (tatami mat floor and futon bedding), communal bathroom and Buddhist vegetarian dinner and breakfast. In addition to the stay, you have a unique opportunity to attend a morning service at the temple.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 5 km (3.1 miles) Elevation: flat Terrain: sealed road and temple ground</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Ryoushou-in [Temple lodging - Japanese style room with futon beddings and shared bathroom]
4	Tue 14/10/2025	Guided tour of Togakushi	<p>Togakushi is a hidden gem perfect for international walkers seeking a blend of natural beauty and the cultural significance of Japan. This enchanting area offers trails that meander through deep forests, leading to some of Japan's most revered Shinto shrines. Japan's native religion of Shintoism has a strong association with nature worship and a belief that notable natural features, such as old trees, are imbued with divinity. This belief is on grand display in Togakushi, where the five shrines making up the Shinto complex are spread through the forest with trails leading from one to the next. Wander along the majestic avenue of cedars, many of which are centuries old, and immerse yourself in the tranquility of this sacred landscape.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you explore the serene Kagamiike pond, marveling at the dramatic autumn colors. Altogether, Togakushi promises an unforgettable walking adventure that showcases the true heart of Japan.</p> <p>Tonight, you will transfer to a mountain hotel surrounded by stunning views.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 10 km (6.2 miles) Elevation: 140 m (460 feet) ascent Terrain: well-maintained path and some uneven nature trail</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Shinshu Tenku Resort Arcadia [Twin room]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
5	Wed 15/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Matsumoto	<p>Aboard an express train, you head for Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture, in the heartland of the Japan Alps. During Japan's feudal period, Matsumoto became an important castle town ruled by a powerful local clan. After arriving in Matsumoto, you will have a guided walking tour of downtown Matsumoto, including the well-preserved old merchant district, Nakamachi and Nawate-Dori, to see the Namako-walled homes and stores selling traditional items.</p> <p>The next stop is Matsumoto Castle, one of the oldest Japanese structures with five external levels and six internal stories. You then visit the former Kaichi School, the first community school in the region, built in 1876. Before this school was opened, only the children of Samurai were given the opportunity of higher education. In 1872, a new national education system modeled after community-based Western education systems was reformed. The Kaichi School was one of the first of its kind in the country, and the people of Matsumoto, mostly farmers, were very excited by this prospect of educating their children and donated 70% of the cost of the building, which is estimated to have cost about 134 million yen at that time. Today the Former Kaichi School holds the country's best collection of education documents and historical materials, as well as plenty of nostalgia in a beautiful place.</p> <p>Tonight, you will enjoy an Italian fusion-style meal using local produce at a small restaurant. Stay overnight in Matsumoto.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 8 km (5 miles) Elevation: flat Terrain: sealed road and stairs in Matsumoto Castle</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Matsumoto Marunouchi Hotel [Deluxe Double/Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
6	Thu 16/10/2025	Guided tour of Norikura Kogen and Mt Norikura	<p>Today, you will transfer to tonight's destination, Kamikochi, via the Norikura Kogen (Highlands) and Mt Norikura, where you can walk among blazing autumn colours. Norikura Kogen is a large plateau dotted with a series of lovely waterfalls. After enjoying some light walks here, you will go up to Tatamidaira at 2,700 m above sea level by your private minibus where you start on various trails of Mt Norikura (3,026 m).</p> <p>Mt Norikura (or Norikuradake) is the collective name for the 23 mountains on the southern edge of the Northern Japan Alps, with its highest peak being Mt Kengamine (3,026m). Although being a 3,000 m-class mountain, Mt. Norikura is well-known for being easy to climb because the trailhead, Tatamidaira, is located at an altitude of 2,702 meters and accessible by public bus; accordingly, it is a much easier and shorter climb.</p> <p>You can enjoy the magnificent views from Japan's highest skyline in Norikura amongst the autumn foliage with the snowy peaks of the Japanese Alps in the distance.</p> <p>Finally, you arrive at Kamikochi, one of the highlights of the 2025 Walking Tour of Kamikochi, Nagano and Surrounds. You stay in a Japanese-style room at one of the mountain lodges in the national park for the next two nights. After a hearty dinner at your hotel and a soak in an onsen hot spring bath, you will sleep on futon bedding in a tatami room.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 10 km (6.2 miles)  Elevation: 324 m (1,062 feet) ascent and descent  Terrain: well-maintained mountain trails and open path exposed to the wind</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kamikochi Onsen Hotel [Japanese style room - mountain side with bathroom]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
7	Fri 17/10/2025	Guided tour of Kamikochi	<p>Kamikochi translates as “where the gods descend”. True to its name, it is an alpine plateau surrounded by mountain ranges exceeding 3,000 meters above sea level. This morning, surrounded by the snow-capped Japan Alps high above you, your guide will take you on a 6 km walk. You will walk along boardwalks, which crisscross mossy ponds and streams, and listen to the wind call out through virgin beech forests ablaze in stunning autumn colours to Myojin-ike Pond.</p> <p>After relaxing back at the Kappabashi Bridge area, where you have several lunch options, you can either stroll at your leisure or, if you are up to it, your guide will be very keen to show you another 4 km trek to an outstanding spot, the Taisho-ike Pond.</p> <p>Another night at beautiful Kamikochi.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 6-10 km (3.7-6.2 miles) Elevation: flat Terrain: well-maintained nature trails</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Kamikochi Onsen Hotel [Japanese style room - mountain side with bathroom]
8	Sat 18/10/2025	Guided tour of Shinhotaka	<p>Heading further into the heart of the Japan Alps by a private minibus, you arrive at the Mt Hotaka today. Here you will ride the Shinhotaka Ropeway, the longest and most unique ropeway in Japan, to the observation deck at the mountain's peak. It is unique in a way that it has one of the largest elevation gains in the country as it climbs over 1000 meters up the side of the Hotake Mountain Range, which includes Oku-Hotakadake, Japan's third highest peak. But, its most distinguishing feature is its double-decker gondola cars, the first of their kind in Japan, which offer excellent views of the Okuhida Region. At the peak station, you will be rewarded with the panoramic autumn views of the surrounding mountains of the Japan Alps, and enjoy a leisurely nature walk around the peak station.</p> <p>Tonight, you will have an ultimate Japanese onsen experience at Hirayu Onsen, one of the most popular onsen hot spring hamlets in Japan. Enjoy a relaxing soak after spending a day in the mountains and fresh air.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 3 km (1.9 miles) Elevation: almost flat Terrain: well-maintained path</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Hirayu no Mori [Western style bedroom with private toilet & basin, and public bath house]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
9	Sun 19/10/2025	Transfer to Takayama and guided tour of Utsue Shijuhachitaki Waterfall Natural Park	<p>Today, you will transfer to your next destination Takayama, the heart of the rugged Hida Region. Here you will enjoy another lovely walk at Utsue Shijuhachitaki (Utsue Forty-eight Falls) track with your guide. This treasure trove of waterfalls is bound to refresh your body and soul. In the distance of about a kilometer, see waterfalls of all shapes and sizes and gaze out at the vast mountain ranges of Hida from a park lookout point. Experience the beauty of Mother Nature as large clusters of waterfalls wet the surfaces of ancient trees and moss-covered boulders that lie amidst a steeply inclined ravine. In autumn you can enjoy exceptional seasonal beauty, the strong contrast of the waterfalls against the surrounding autumn leaves. The park is part of the "Top 33 Spots in Hida and Mino for Autumn-Leaf Viewing" list and normally sees changing fall colors from mid-October to early November.</p> <p>Arriving at Takayama City this afternoon, you will stay at a traditional ryokan and enjoy kaiseki dinner, onsen bath and futon bedding for the last time on the tour.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 5 km (3.1 miles) Elevation: 220 m (721 feet) Terrain: maintained walking path, but some areas are slippery</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Ryokan Asunaro [Japanese style room with futon beddings]
10	Mon 20/10/2025	Morning guided tour of Takayama	<p>This morning, you will have a guided walking tour of the very historic town of Takayama. While you are in Takayama, you will visit the Miyagawa Morning Market, said to have been running for over 200 years, walk through the old streets where locals go for many traditional crafts, such as lacquerware, food items, timber crafts and sake at Sanmachi-suji. Takayama Jinya is another point of interest in Takayama which is a history-packed, one-time prefectural office for the Tokugawa shogunate in feudal times.</p> <p>This afternoon and evening are your free time. Pick your favourite restaurants in this very hospitable small city for your lunch and dinner today. Another night at the ryokan.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 4 km (2.5 miles) Elevation: flat Terrain: town walking on a sealed road</p>	Breakfast	Ryokan Asunaro [Japanese style room with futon beddings]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
11	Tue 21/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Nagoya	<p>After breakfast, you leave Takayama and take an express train down through scenic valleys to the city of Nagoya. The region is a base of many internationally-known manufacturers such as Toyota and Noritake, and you will learn the background of those companies through a guided walking tour today. On this tour, you will visit Noritake Garden with a demonstration of their porcelain production and historical products, and the Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology to learn the fascinating history of this company.</p> <p>In the evening, you will embark on a fun-filled bar hopping guided by a local guide, very appropriate for the stay in the lively city of Nagoya.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 5 km (3.1 miles) Elevation: flat Terrain: town walking on a sealed road</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Nagoya JR Gate Tower Hotel [Western style room]
12	Wed 22/10/2025	Transfer to and guided tour of Kyoto	<p>Once again, and the last time on this tour, you will hop on the shinkansen (bullet train) and transfer from Nagoya to your final destination, Kyoto. Kyoto is perhaps Japan's biggest drawcard for international tourists due to a great number of significant landmarks. Today, you will have a guided walking tour from a popular Arashiyama going through the bamboo forests and many lovely temple gardens. Gradually, you will notice you see fewer and fewer tourists as you walk away from Arashiyama deep into Sagano. Soon you will come out to the quiet 600-meter-long Toriimoto Preserved Street, a world away from the hustle and bustle of Arashiyama. Here you find the approach to the Adashino Nenbutsuji Temple.</p> <p>Adashino Nenbutsuji Temple in Kyoto unveils a hauntingly beautiful secret - about 8,000 unmarked small Buddha statues, standing as silent witnesses in its cemetery. This sacred ground, established in 811 by Kukai, tells a tale of reverence and remembrance. The well-preserved bamboo grove behind the temple provides a serene backdrop, offering a perfect escape from the crowds. Hopefully, you will discover a different face of the ever-popular ancient capital of Kyoto.</p> <p>After checking into a hotel in downtown Kyoto, you will have a farewell Japan dinner with your fellow travelers at a local restaurant.</p> <p>Today's walking distance: 5 km (3.1 miles) Elevation: 121 meters (397 feet) ascent Terrain: town walking on a sealed road</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Cross Hotel Kyoto [Superior King/Twin]



DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
13	Thu 23/10/2025	Goodbye in Kyoto	<p>After breakfast, your 2025 Walking Tour of Kamikochi, Nagano and Surrounds concludes. You can return to Tokyo or head to Osaka's Kansai International Airport for existing Japan.</p> <p>Perhaps you might like to linger in Japan for a little longer. We will be delighted to plan your personal post-tour extension to show you a different part of Japan. Please see our Model Extension Itineraries on the Private Tour page to get some inspiration! Or just ask our knowledgeable travel consultants for something custom and unique.</p> <p>Note: The cost of your transfer to your departure airport is not included in our Small Group Tour, as we have found many guests choose to stay in Japan a bit longer, however, we are happy to arrange your transfer to your next destination or your exit airport. Please see our FAQ for more details.</p>	Breakfast	
Inclusions for Group Tour			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 12 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) listed above</li> <li>■ Airport meet &amp; greet and hotel transfer by public transport on arrival</li> <li>■ Private guide throughout the tour</li> <li>■ All local transport (train, bus and private minivans)</li> <li>■ Cultural activities and entry fees included in itinerary</li> <li>■ Luggage transfers (1 piece per person)</li> <li>■ Meals as specified</li> </ul>		
Exclusions for Group Tour			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ International and domestic airfare (unless otherwise stated)</li> <li>■ Travel insurance</li> <li>■ Transfers on the last day</li> <li>■ Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (except the first drink at each meal)</li> <li>■ Tips and gratuities (not routinely expected in Japan)</li> <li>■ Personal expenses (laundry, coin-locker, internet, telephone etc.)</li> <li>■ Visa (if required)</li> </ul>		