



# SAKURA CIRCUIT: JOURNEY TO JAPAN

April 11—21, 2025

Itinerary Subject to Change

## DAY 1 SATURDAY, APRIL 11

Depart on flight for Tokyo.

## DAY 2 SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Arrive Tokyo and transfer to Nagaoka by bullet train and check into **New Otani Hotel**.

## DAY 3 MONDAY, APRIL 13

Experience Japan's most celebrated seasonal tradition during hanami season at **Yukyuzan Park**. Stroll beneath canopies of delicate pink and white cherry blossoms, a fleeting natural spectacle that has inspired Japanese culture and art for centuries.

Meet with city officials as official ambassadors from Fort Worth in honor of the almost 40 year sister partnership with Nagaoka.

Welcome dinner (included).





## DAY 4

### TUESDAY, APRIL 14

Visit the **Nagaoka Fireworks Factory** to see the behind the scenes for the world famous Nagaoka Fireworks Festival, considered to be one of the top three fireworks festivals in Japan.

Explore the **Teradomari Street Market**, a bustling and active fish market. Try skewered squids, scallops, and seasonal fish together with the ocean breeze.



## DAY 5

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

Travel to Kyoto by bullet train and check into **Moxy Kyoto**.

Afternoon and evening at your leisure.

## DAY 6

### THURSDAY, APRIL 16

Tour **Kiyomizu-dera**, a Buddhist temple situated atop a small mountain on the east side of Kyoto with a commanding view of the city.

Explore **Ninnezaka and Sanenzaka**, one of the city's best-preserved historic districts. It is a great place to experience traditional old Kyoto. The streets are lined by small shops, cafes and restaurants which have been catering to tourists and pilgrims for centuries. These businesses retain their traditional design, and they continue to serve customers today, selling local specialties such as Kiyomizu-yaki pottery, sweets, pickles, crafts and other souvenirs..

Lunch (included).

Visit **Gion**, Kyoto's most famous geisha district, known for its traditional wooden teahouses, cobblestone streets, and elegant atmosphere. Visitors may catch a glimpse of a geiko or maiko on their way to an evening performance. Gion beautifully blends Kyoto's rich cultural heritage with charming historical scenery.

Experience a Japanese tea ceremony, a traditional activity where you learn how to make and serve matcha (green tea). It is a peaceful and respectful practice that shows Japanese culture and hospitality. Guests also learn proper manners and enjoy sweets with the tea.

Evening at your leisure.



## DAY 7

### FRIDAY, APRIL 17

Visit the serene **Daisenin Temple**, a sub-temple within the historic Daitoku-ji complex, known for its peaceful atmosphere and beautifully preserved Zen gardens. Under the guidance of a resident monk, take part in a traditional Zazen (Zen meditation) session. This experience offers a quiet moment to center your mind, learn proper meditation posture, and gain insight into the principles of Zen Buddhism. It is a calming and meaningful way to connect with Japanese spiritual culture in an authentic temple setting.

Tour **Kinkaku-ji**, a famous sightseeing spot in Kyoto. The golden temple reflects beautifully in the pond and is surrounded by a peaceful garden. Visitors can enjoy walking around the area and taking photos. It is one of the most popular places to visit in Japan..

Afternoon and evening at your leisure.



## DAY 8

### SATURDAY, APRIL 18

Travel to Tokyo by bullet train and check into **Shinagawa Prince Hotel**.

Afternoon and evening at your leisure.

## DAY 9

### SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Discover the fascinating world of Japan's legendary warriors at the **Samurai Ninja Museum Tokyo**. Explore engaging exhibits showcasing authentic samurai armor, swords, and ninja tools, and learn about their history and unique combat traditions.

Visit **Asakusa Kannon Temple**, one of Tokyo's most colorful and popular temples. A 650-foot shopping street with a history of several centuries, called **Nakamise**, leads from the outer gate to the temple's second gate. Alongside typical Japanese souvenirs such as yukata and folding fans, various traditional local snacks.

Sushi-making experience for lunch (included).

Visit **Ginza**, Tokyo's most famous upmarket shopping, dining and entertainment district, featuring numerous department stores, boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, night clubs and cafes. One square meter of land in the district's center is worth over ten million yen, making it one of the most expensive real estate in Japan.

Evening at your leisure.



## DAY 10

### MONDAY, APRIL 20

Free day.

Tokyo Bay Dinner Cruise farewell dinner (included).

## DAY 11

### TUESDAY, APRIL 21

Depart on flight for DFW